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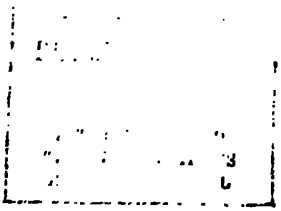
THE

WORKS

OF

VOLTAIRE.

VOL. XXIV.



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THE

HENRIADE.

BY

Mr. DE VOLTAIRE.

Tranſlated from the FRENCH,

By T. SMOLLETT M.D. T. FRANCKLIN, M. A. and others.

VOL. XXIV.

LONDON:

Printed for J. NEWBERY, R. BALDWIN, S. CROWDER, and Co. J. COOTE, T. DAVIES, W. JOHNSTON, R. FRANCKLIN, and G. KEARSLEY.

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THE

HENRIADE.

CANTO the FIRST.

THE ARGUMENT.

Henry III. *join'd by* Henry de Bourbon, *king of* Navarre, *againſt the League, having blockaded* Paris, *ſends over* Henry de Bourbon *privately into* England, *in hopes of obtaining ſuccours from queen* Elizabeth. *A violent ſtorm over-taking him in his voyage, he is oblig'd to put into an iſland, where an old hermit receives him, and foretells his change of religion, and acceſſion to the throne. Deſcription of* England, *and its government.*

THE HENRIADE.

CANTO the FIRST.

* THE chief renown'd, who rul'd in France, I ſing,
By right of conqueſt, and of birth, a king;
In various ſuff'rings reſolute, and brave,
Faction he quell'd: he conquer'd, and forgave.
Subdued the dangerous League, and † factious Mayne,
And curb'd the head-ſtrong arrogance of Spain.

* *The chief renown'd,*] Henry IV. of France, ſon of Anthony king of Navarre, who deſcended in a direct line from Robert Count de Clermont, youngeſt ſon of Lewis IX. or St. Lewis king of France. The poſterity of his eldeſt ſon *Philip the Bold*, failing in Henry III. king of France, three hundred years after the death of St. Lewis, Henry of Bourbon became heir to the crown, as deſcended from the above-mentioned Count de Clermont, who married Beatrix, daughter of Agnes de Bourbon, heir of Archembald, lord of Bourbon in the middle of the XIIIth century.

† Charles duke de Mayne, Brother of Henry duke de Guiſe, who form'd the League, a faction in France; who, under pretence of danger of the church, made head againſt Henry III. king of France, and, after his death, againſt Henry of Bourbon, who gain'd great advantages over the Spaniards in confederacy with the League.

He taught thoſe realms he conquer'd to obey,
And made his ſubjects happy by his ſway.

O heaven-born truth, deſcend, celeſtial muſe,
Thy power, thy brightneſs in my verſe infuſe.
May kings attentive hear thy voice divine
To teach the monarchs of mankind is thine.
'Tis thine to war-enkind'ling realms to ſhew
What dire effects from curſt diviſions flow.
Relate the troubles of preceding times;
The people's ſuff'ring's, and the prince's crimes.
And O! if fable may her ſuccours lend,
And with thy voice her ſofter accents blend;
If on thy light her ſhades ſweet graces ſhed,
If her fair hand e'er deck'd thy ſacred head,
Let her with me thro' all thy limits rove,
Not to conceal thy beauties, but improve.

* Valois then govern'd the diſtracted land,
Looſe flow'd the reins of empire in his hand:
Rights were confounded, laws neglected bore
No force, alas! for Valois reign'd no more.
No more the prince for deeds of war renown'd,
Whom as her ſon victorious conqueſt own'd;

* *Valois then govern'd,*] Henry III. king of France, one of the principal heroes of this poem, is always called Valois, the name *of the royal branch* to which he belong'd.

Whoſe

Whoſe arms thro' Europe ſpread diſorder'd fear,
Whoſe loyal ſubjects ſhed the pious tear,
When the bleak north proclaim'd him truly great,
And laid her crowns, and ſcepters at his feet.
Thoſe rays of glory, erſt in battle won,
Sunk into night, and vaniſh'd from the throne.
There ſat the monarch on the lap of eaſe,
Reclining fondly in the arms of peace.
Too weak to bear in each lethargic hour,
The regal diadem, and weight of pow'r.
Voluptuous youths uſurp'd the ſole command,
And reign'd, in truth, the ſov'reigns of the land.
Pleas'd in their ſoft luxurious prince to find
Corrupted morals, and a female mind.
Meantime the Guiſes roſe at fortune's call;
And built their ſchemes of greatneſs on his fall.
Thence ſprung the League, which prov'd the fatal ſcource
Of num'rous ills, and baffled all his force.
The ſervile crowd, with vain chimæras fed,
Too blindly follow'd where the tyrants led.
Now from the Louvre ſee the monarch fly,
No faithful friend, no kind protection nigh;

All had been loſt, but warlike* Bourbon came,
Whoſe gen'rous ſoul was fraught with virtue's flame.
'Twas his the royal ſacrifice to ſave,
And teach once more the monarch to be brave.
The kings to Paris with their troops advance,
The eyes of Europe all are fix'd on France.
Rome takes th' alarm, her fears the Spaniards ſhare,
And wait with dread the iſſue of the war.

High on the walls inhuman Diſcord ſtood,
Eager for ſlaughter, and athirſt for blood;
Thro' all the city rag'd, nor rag'd in vain,
But drove to arms the hoſtile League, and Mayne:
Thro' church, and ſtate the deadly poiſon ſpread,
And call'd the proud Iberia to her aid.
This ſavage monſter ſcenes of horror loves,
And plagues the vot'ries whom her ſoul approves.
She racks, and galls the ſlaves her chains confin'd,
And riots in the torments of mankind.
Weſtward of Paris, where the winding Seine
Adorns each meadow with eternal green,
Where oft' the Graces, and the Muſes play,
The troops of Valois ſhon in dread array.

* *Bourbon*] Henry IV. is call'd indifferently throughout the poem either Bourbon, or Henry. He was born at Pau in Bearn le 13 December 1553.

There,

There, whom religion ſway'd by diff'rent laws
Revenge united in their ſov'reign's cauſe.
A thouſand chiefs ſtood forth at Bourbon's word,
Love join'd their hearts, and valour drew the ſword.
With joy they follow'd the bright paths of fame,
But one their leader, and their church the ſame.

Immortal* Louis eyed him from above
With all the fondneſs of parental love:
Virtues he ſaw which Gallia's king might grace,
And future glories worthy of his race.
Charm'd with his courage, yet he griev'd to find
Such weak diſcernment in ſo brave a mind:
Would gladly guide him to the throne of truth,
And wiſh'd to check the errors of his youth.
But valiant Henry gain'd the regal crown,
And roſe by meaſures to himſelf unknown.
Louis was preſent from his bleſt abode
To lead the youthful hero in his road.
Full oft' unſeen the kind aſſiſtance came,
That toils, and dangers might augment his fame.

Oft' had our walls beheld with martial rage
In doubtful war th'embattl'd ranks engage.

* *Immortal Louis*] St. Louis, the ninth of that name, king of France, from whom the Bourbon branch was deſcended.

The plains were deſolate, and carnage ſpread
From ſhore to ſhore her mountains of the dead,
When Valois thus addreſs'd the chief with ſighs,
And tears of ſorrow ſtreaming from his eyes.

See to what height thy monarchs ills are grown,
There read the faithful portrait of thy own.
With equal hate the factious Leaguers join
To ſtrike at Bourbon's glory, and at mine.
Seditious Paris, with a proud diſdain,
Rejects the preſent, and the future reign.
The ties of blood, the laws, each gen'rous care
That fills thy ſoul, proclaims thee lawful heir.
Great are thy virtues, and, I bluſh to own,
For this would Paris drive thee from the throne.
Nay more, to ſhew that heav'n approves the deed,
Religion heaps her curſes on thy head.
Rome without armies diſtant nations awes,
Spain hurls her thunder, and aſſerts her cauſe.
Friends, ſubjects, kindred, in this evil day,
Or baſely fly, or proudly diſobey.
Rich is the harveſt of Iberia's gains,
Who pours her legions on my deſert plains.
Perchance, the ſuccours of a foreign force
May ſtop th' impending danger in it's courſe.

Britannia's

Britannia's queen may lend the friendly aid,
And mutual terror may our foes invade.
What, tho' eternal jealouſy, and pride
Oppoſe our int'reſt, and our hearts divide.
When life's ſevereſt ills have been endur'd,
My glory blaſted, and my fame obſcur'd;
When vile affronts have made my honor poor,
My ſubjects, and my country are no more.
Who comes theſe proud inſulters to controul
Is moſt my friend, and deareſt to my ſoul.
No common, liſtleſs agent will I truſt,
Be thou my envoy in a cauſe ſo juſt.
On thee my fortune in the war depends,
Thy merit only can procure me friends.

Thus Valois ſpoke, and Bourbon heard with grief
The new deſigns, and counſels of the chief.
His great, and gen'rous mind diſdain'd to yield
Thus to divide the glory of the field.
There was a time when conqueſt met his arm,
And all thoſe honours which the brave can charm:
When ſtrong in pow'r, unaided by intrigue,
Himſelf, with *Condé, quell'd the trembling League.

*Condé] Henry, prince of Condé. He was the hopes of the Proteſtant party: and died at Saint-Jean d'Angeley, aged 35 years, in 1685.

Yet

Yet, in obedience to the king's command,
He left his laurels, and withdrew his hand.
The troops, amaz'd, with reſtleſs ardor burn,
Their fate, their fortune waits on his return.
The abſent hero ſtill preſerv'd his fame,
The guilty city ſhudder'd at his name:
Each moment thought the mighty warriour near,
With death, and deſolation in his rear.

He thro' the plains of Neuſtria bends his way,
Attended only by his friend *Mornay.
Mornay, too good to flatter, or deceive,
The cauſe of error too averſe to leave.
By zeal, and prudence ſtudious to advance
Alike the int'reſt of his church and France.
The courtier's cenſor, but at court belov'd,
Rome's greateſt foe, and yet by Rome approv'd.

Between two rocks, which hoary ocean laves,
And beats with all the fury of his waves,
The port of Dieppe meets the hero's eyes,
And crowds of eager mariners ſupplies.

Morna] Dupleſſis Mornay; the braveſt, and moſt virtuous perſon belonging to the Proteſtant party. When Henry IV. chang'd his religion, Mornay reproach'd him in the ſevereſt manner, and retir'd from court. He was called the pope of the Huguenots.

Their

Their hands prepare the veſſels for the main,
Thoſe ſov'reign rulers of the azure plain.
The ſtormy Boreas, faſt-enchain'd in air,
Leaves the ſmooth ſea to ſofter Zephyr's care.
Their anchor weigh'd, they ſwiftly quit the ſtrand,
And ſoon deſcry Britannia's happy land.

When lo! the day's bright ſtar is hid in clouds,
And gath'ring whirlwinds whiſtle thro' the ſhrouds.
Heav'n gives her thunder, waves on waves ariſe,
And floods of lightning burſt from all the ſkies.
Death mounts the ſtorm, and foaming billows ſhew
The king of terrors to the ſailors view.
Nor death, nor dangers Bourbon's ſoul annoy,
His country's ſorrows all his cares employ;
For her he caſts the longing look behind,
The ſtorm accuſes, and condemns the wind.
Leſs gen'rous warmth the Roman's breaſt inſpir'd,
By love of conqueſt, and ambition fir'd,
When, launching boldly from Epirus' coaſt,
By angry ſeas, and furious ſurges toſt,
He dar'd his mightier fortune to oppoſe
To all the pow'r of Neptune, and his foes:
Firm, and convinc'd that no impending doom
Could ſnatch it's monarch from the world, and Rome.

'Twas

'Twas then that being, infinitely wiſe,
At whoſe high will all empires fall, or riſe,
Who gave this world it's fair, and beauteous form,
Who calms the ocean, and directs the ſtorm,
On Gallia's hero look'd with pity down
From the bright radiance of his ſaphire throne.
The waves, obedient to his dread command,
Convey'd the veſſel to the neighbouring land.
Guided by heav'n, ſecure the hero ſtood
Where Jerſey's iſle emerges from the flood.

Near to the ſhore there lay a calm retreat,
By ſhades defended from the ſolar heat.
A rock, that hid the fury of the ſeas,
Forbid the entrance of each ruder breeze.
By nature's hand adorn'd, a moſſy grot
Improv'd the beauties of this rural ſpot.
An holy hermit, train'd in wiſdom's ways,
There ſpent the quiet evening of his days.
Loſt to the world, and all it's trifling ſhew,
His only ſtudy was himſelf to know.
O'er ev'ry fault his penſive mind woud rove,
Which pleaſure dictates, or which ſprings from love.
The flow'ry meadows, and the ſilver ſtreams
Had rais'd his ſoul to more enlighten'd themes.

Each

Each paſſion quell'd in this retir'd abode,
His ardent wiſh was union with his God.
Wiſdom before him ſpread her ample page,
And heav'n protected his declining age.
She pour'd her pureſt bleſſings on his head,
And taught him Fate's myſterious book to read.
The hoary ſage, who well our hero knew,
Whom God inform'd with ſcience ever true,
Near a clear ſtream invites the prince to taſte
The ſimple diet of his rural feaſt.
He oft had fled from vanity, and care,
To humble cottages, and ſimpler fare.
Had bid adieu to courts, and courtly pride,
And laid the pomp of majeſty aſide.

In plain, and uſeful converſe much was ſaid
Of troubles thro' the chriſtian empire ſpread.
Mornay unmov'd determin'd to protect,
With zealous fervor Calvin, and his ſect.
Henry, in doubt what precepts to believe,
Petition'd heav'n one ray of light to give.
Error, he ſaid, in all preceding times,
Has truth conceal'd, and been the nurſe of crimes.
Muſt I then wander, and miſtake the road,
Whoſe only confidence is plac'd in God.

A God, ſo gracious, ſure will lend his aid,
And teach mankind what worſhip ſhould be paid.

Let us, replied the venerable ſeer,
God's ſecret counſels, and deſigns revere.
Nor raſhly think that human errors bring
Their muddy currents from ſo pure a ſpring.
Well I remember, when theſe aged eyes
Beheld this ſect in humble weakneſs riſe,
When, as an exile dreading human ſight,
It fled for refuge to the ſhades of night.
By ſlow degrees the phantom rais'd her head,
And all around her baleful influence ſhed.
Plac'd on the throne, no pow'r her force confines,
She reigns our tyrant, and o'erturns our ſhrines.
Far from the court, in this obſcure retreat,
With ſighs, and tears I weep Religion's fate.
One hope remains to chear life's dreary vale;
So ſtrange a worſhip cannot long prevail:
It's new-born glory in our days ſhall ceaſe,
Firſt ſprung from man, and founded in caprice.
Frail, like ourſelves, all human works decay;
God ſweeps their glory, and their pride away.
Safe, and ſecure his holy city ſtands;
Nor dreads the malice of our mortal hands.
In vain the fabric hell, and time invade,
His own right arm the ſtrong foundation laid.

On

On thee, great Bourbon, will he pour his light,
And chaſe the miſts of error from thy ſight.
On Valois' throne, with providence thy ſhield,
Bright wilt thou ſhine, and all thy foes ſhall yield.
Through paths of glory conqueſt leads thy ſword;
'Tis heaven's decree; the higheſt gave his word.
Yet hope not raſhly, in the pride of youth,
To enter Paris, uninform'd by truth.
But moſt of love's bewitching draught beware,
The braveſt hearts are conquer'd by the fair.
From that ſweet poiſon guard thy manly ſoul;
Though paſſion calls, and pleaſure crowns the bowl,
And when, at length, this ſage advice purſued,
The factious Leaguers, and thyſelf ſubdued,
In horrid ſeige thy bounteous hand ſhall give
Life to a nation, and it's ſtrength revive;
Then all thy realms ſhall taſte the ſweets of peace,
All ſtrife ſhall vaniſh, and all diſcord ceaſe.
Then raiſe thine eyes to that almighty lord
Whom erſt our fathers honour'd, and ador'd.
Who moſt preſerves his image, moſt ſhall find
That virtue pleaſes, and that heav'n is kind.

Thus ſpoke the ſeer, each word new warmth beſtow'd,
And Henry's ſoul with ſecret raptures glow'd.

Thoſe

Thoſe happy days were preſent to his eyes,
When God to man deſcended from the ſkies;
When virtue open'd all her ſacred ſprings,
Pronounc'd her oracles, and govern'd kings.
With tears he claſpt the hermit to his breaſt,
And parting ſighs his honeſt grief expreſt.
Far diſtant ſcenes creative fancy drew,
And riſing glories dawn'd upon his view.
Marks of ſurprize were ſtamp'd on Mornay's face,
But heav'n from him withheld her gifts of grace.
The world in vain beſtows the name of wiſe,
Where virtue beams, but error's cloud's ariſe.

While thus the ſage, enlighten'd from above,
Spoke to the heart, and tried the prince to move.
Charm'd with his voice the liſt'ning winds ſubſide,
Phœbus breaks forth, and ocean ſmooths the tide.
By him conducted, Bourbon reach'd the ſhore,
And proſp'rous gales the chief to Albion bore.
Soon as he ſaw the ſea-encircled iſle,
It's change of fortune made the hero ſmile.
Where once the public evils owed their cauſe
To long abuſes of the wiſeſt laws,
Where many a warriour fell of high renown,
And kings deſcended from the tott'ring throne,

A virgin queen the regal ſceptre ſway'd,
And fate itſelf her ſov'reign pow'r obey'd.
The wiſe Eliza, whoſe directing hand
Had the great ſcale of Europe at command;
And rul'd a people that alike diſdain
Or freedom's eaſe, or ſlav'ry's iron chain.
Of ev'ry loſs her reign oblivion bred;
There, flocks unnumber'd graze each flow'ry mead.
Britannia's veſſels rule the azure ſeas,
Corn fills her plains, and fruitage loads her trees.
From pole to pole her gallant navies ſweep
The waters of the tributary deep.
On Thames's banks each flow'r of genius thrives,
There ſports the Muſe, and Mars his thunder gives.
Three diff'rent pow'rs at Weſtminſter appear,
And all admire the ties which join them there.
Whom int'reſt parts, the laws together bring,
The people's deputies, the peers, and king.
One whole they form, whoſe terror wide extends
To neighb'ring nations, and their rights defends.
Thrice happy times, when grateful ſubjects ſhew
That loyal, warm affection which is due!
But happier ſtill, when freedom's bleſſings ſpring
From the wiſe conduct of a prudent king.
O when, cried Bourbon, raviſh'd at the ſight,
In France ſhall peace, and glory thus unite?

A female hand has clos'd the gates of war,
Look on, ye monarchs, and adopt her care.
Your nations Diſcord's horrid tide o'erwhelms,
She lives the bleſſing of adoring realms.

Now at that ſpacious city he arrives,
Where nurs'd by heav'n-born freedom plenty lives.
Now, mighty William's tow'r before him ſtood,
Now, fair Eliza's more auguſt abode.
Thither he ſpeeds, attended by Mornay,
His friend, and ſole aſſociate in the way.
True heroes ſcorn that pageantry, and ſtate,
Whoſe glitt'ring honors captivate the great.
For France he ſupplicates with humble prayers,
And native dignity each accent bears.
From honeſt frankneſs all his period's flow,
The only eloquence that ſoldiers know.
Does Valois ſend you to the banks of Thame?
Eliza cries, ſurpriz'd at Valois' name.
Are all your dire contentions at an end!
And you, that bitt'reſt enemy, his friend!
Fame ſpread your diſcords, and that fame was true,
From north, to ſouth, from Ganges, to Peru.
And does that arm, ſo dreaded in the fight,
Protect his honor, and maintain his right!

Diſtreſs,

Diſtreſs, replied the chief, our friendſhip gave,
The chains are broke, and Valois will be brave.
Far happier days he once was doom'd to ſee,
Had all his confidence been plac'd in me.
But fears unmanly in his breaſt aroſe,
'Twas art, and cowardice that made us foes.
Henceforth, the vanquiſh'd ſhall my aid receive,
His wrongs I puniſh, and his faults forgive.
This war ſo juſt may raiſe Britannia's fame,
'Tis thine, great queen, to ſignalize her name.
Let royal mercy ſpread her downy wings,
And crown thy virtues by defending kings.

The queen, impatient, aſks him to relate
What ruthleſs evils harraſs'd Gallia's ſtate.
What ſprings of action had produc'd a change
At once ſo new, ſo wonderful, and ſtrange.
Full oft' of bloody broils, Eliza ſaid,
Thro' Britain's iſle has fame the rumor ſpread.
But who for certainty on fame depends,
Which light with darkneſs, truth with falſehood blends?
From you or Valois' friend, or conqu'ring foe,
Thoſe long diſſentions I could wiſh to know.
Yourſelf was witneſs, and can beſt impart
What myſtic ties have chang'd ſo brave a heart.

Diſplay

Diſplay your martial deeds, your griefs declare,
No life more worthy of a royal ear.

And muſt I then, return'd the chief with ſighs,
Recall thoſe ſcenes of horror to my eyes!
O would to heav'n, oblivions endleſs night
With thickeſt ſhades might veil them from my ſight!
Muſt Bourbon tell of kindred prince's crimes,
And the fell madneſs of preceding times?
I ſhudder at the thought, but your command,
Reſpect of pow'r forbids me to withſtand.
Others, no doubt, would uſe refin'd addreſs,
Diſguiſe the truth, and make their errors leſs:
But I reject an artifice ſo weak,
And like a ſoldier, not an envoy ſpeak.

THE

HENRIADE.

CANTO the SECOND.

THE ARGUMENT.

Henry *the great relates to queen* Elizabeth *the hiſtory of the civil wars of* France. *He traces them from their origin, and enters into a detail of the maſſacres committed on St.* Bartholomew's *day.*

THE HENRIADE.

CANTO the SECOND.

IN France, great ſov'reign, to increaſe the curſe,
Our ills are riſen from a ſacred ſource.
Religion, raging with inhuman zeal,
Arms ev'ry hand, and points the fatal ſteel.
To me however it will leaſt belong
To prove the Romans, or Geneva wrong.
Whatever names divine the parties claim,
In mad impoſture they are both the ſame.
If in the ſtrifes, which Europe's ſons divide,
Murder, and treaſon mark the erring ſide;
Since both alike in blood their hands imbrue,
Their crimes are equal, and their blindneſs too.

Line 6. Several Hiſtorians have deſcribed Henry IV. as wavering between the two religions; here he is deſcribed as he was, a man of honour, ſeriouſly endeavouring to inform himſelf, the friend of truth, the enemy of perſecution, and deteſting guilt wherſoever it appeared.

For me, whoſe buſineſs is to guard the ſtate,
I leave to heav'n their vengeance, and their fate.
My hand ne'er treſpaſs'd on the rights divine;
Or e'er profan'd the incenſe of the ſhrine.
Periſh each ſtateſman cruel, and unkind,
Who reigns deſpotic o'er the human mind;
Who ſtains with blood religion's ſacred word,
And kills, or gains new converts by his ſword.
Preſuming raſhly that a gracious God
Approves, the ſacrifice of human blood.
Oh wou'd that God, whoſe laws I wiſh to know,
On Valois' court ſuch ſentiments beſtow!
The Guiſes falſely plead religion's cauſe,
No ſcruple checks them, and no conſcience awes.
At me theſe leaders, inſolent and proud,
Direct their fury, and enſnare the crowd.
Theſe eyes have ſeen our citizens engage
In mutual murders, with a zealous rage:
For vain diſputes have ſeen their pious care
Deal all around the horrid flames of war.

Line 25. Francis duke of Guiſe, commonly at that time called the Great duke of Guiſe, was the father of Balafré. It was he, who with the cardinal his brother, laid the foundations of the league. He had ſeveral great great qualities, which however we muſt take care not to dignify with the name of virtues.

You

You know the madneſs of thoſe vulgar minds
Which faction warms, and ſuperſtition blinds;
When, proudly arming in a cauſe divine,
No pow'r their head-ſtrong paſſion can confine.
Er'ſt in theſe happy realms yourſelf beheld
The riſing evil, and it's danger quell'd:
The troubl'd ſcene aſſum'd a milder form;
Your virtuous cares ſubdued the gath'ring ſtorm.
No reign more pleaſing cou'd I wiſh to ſee,
Your laws are flouriſhing, your city free.
Far other paths did Medicis purſue,
Far leſs belov'd, leſs merciful than you.
Mov'd by theſe tales of miſery, and woe,
More of her conduct ſhou'd you ſeek to know,
Myſelf her real character will tell,
Nor ought exaggerate, nor ought conceal.
Many have tried, but few cou'd e'er impart
The ſecret counſels of ſo deep a heart.
Full twenty years within the palace bred
Much to my coſt, I ſaw the tempeſt ſpread.

The king expiring in the bloom of life
Left a free courſe to his ambitious wife.

Form'd by her cares to empire, either ſon
Alike ſhe hated when he reign'd alone.
Her hands, the ſource from whence confuſion flow'd,
The ſeeds of jealouſy, and diſcord ſow'd.
Her deep deſigns, no wild effect of chance,
To Condè Guiſe oppos'd, and France to France.
By turns defending enemies, and friends,
And rivals aiding for her private ends.
Falſe to her ſect, and ſuperſtition's ſlave,
She ſought each pleaſure which ambition gave.
Scarce did one virtuous grace adorn her mind,
Deform'd with all the vices of her kind.
Forgive the freedom of an honeſt heart;
You reign a ſtranger to your ſex's art.

Line 55. Catharine of Medicis quarrel'd with her ſon Charles IX. towards the latter end of his life, and afterwards with Henry III. She had ſo openly expreſſed her diſlike of the government of Francis II. that ſhe was ſuſpected, though unjuſtly, of having haſtened the death of that king.

Line 60. In the memoirs of the League is contained a letter from Catharine of Medicis to the prince of Condé, in which ſhe returns him her thanks for having taken arms againſt the court.

Line 63. When ſhe believed that the battle of Dreux was loſt, and the proteſtants had gained the victory, "Well then, ſhe "cried, we will ſay our prayers in French".

Line 63. She was ſo weak as to believe in Magick, witneſs the Talismans which were found upon her after her death.

Auguſt Eliza, bleſt with ev'ry charm
That thought can fancy, or that heav'n can form,
To win affection, or to guard a ſtate,
Lives a bright pattern to the good, and great.
With love, and wonder all your deeds are ſeen,
And Europe ranks you with her greateſt men.
Francis the ſecond, in youth's early pride,
By fate untimely join'd his ſire, and died.
Guiſe he ador'd, no more his years had ſhewn,
Nor vice, nor virtue mark'd him for their own.
Charles, younger ſtill, the regal name obtain'd,
But fear evinc'd, 'twas Medicis that reign'd.
She ſought by artful policy to bring
Eternal childhood on the riſing king.
A hundred battles ſpoke her new command,
And diſcord's flames were kindled by her hand.
Two rival parties ſhe with rage inſpir'd,
Their arms directed, and their boſoms fir'd.
Dreux firſt beheld their banners wave in air,
Ill-fated theatre of horrid war!

Line 87. The battle of Dreux was the firſt pitched battle between the catholic and proteſtant parties. It happened in 1562.

Old Montmorenci near the royal tomb
Met from a warriour's arm a warriour's doom.
At Orleans Guiſe reſign'd his lateſt breath,
A ſtern aſſaſſin gave the ſtroke of death.
My father ſtill unwilling ſlave at court,
Was fortune's bubble, and the queen's ſupport;
Wrought his own fate, in battle firmly ſtood,
And died for thoſe who thirſted for his blood.
Condé vouchſaf'd a parent's aid to lend,
My ſureſt guardian, and my trueſt friend.

Nurs'd

Line 89. Anne de Montmorenci, a man remarkable for his obſtinacy, and the moſt unfortunate general of his time, was taken priſoner at Pavia and at Dreux, beaten at St. Quintin by Philip II. and was at length mortally wounded at the battle of St. Denis by an Engliſhman named Stuart, the ſame perſon who had taken him priſoner at Dreux.

Line 91. This is the ſame Francis de Guiſe who is mentioned afterwards, famous for the defence of Metz againſt Charles V. He was beſieging the Proteſtants in Orleans in 1563, when Poltrot de meré ſhot him in the back with a piſtol loaded with three poiſoned balls. He was forty-four years old when he died.

Line 93. Anthony of Bourbon, king of Navarre, the father of Henry IV. was of a weak and unſettled temper. He quitted the Proteſtant religion in which he was born, juſt when his wife renounced the Catholic. He never knew with certainty what party or what religion he belonged to. He was killed at the ſiege of Rouen, where he aſſiſted the Guiſes, who were his oppreſſors, againſt the Proteſtants whom he loved. He died in 1562, of the ſame age with Francis de Guiſe.

Line 97. The prince of Condé who is here meant, was brother *of the king of* Navarre and uncle of Henry IV. He was a long *time chief of the* Proteſtants, and a great enemy of the Guiſes.

Na

Nurs'd in his camp, beneath the laurel's ſhade,
Amidſt ſurrounding heros was I bred:
Like him diſdaining indolence, and ſloth,
Arms were the toys, and play-things of my youth.
O plains of Jarnac! O unhappy day
That took my guardian, and my friend away!
Condé, whoſe kind protection I enjoy'd,
Thy murd'ring hand, O Monteſquiou, deſtroy'd:
Too weak, too feeble to revenge the blow,
I ſaw thee deal deſtruction on the foe.
Young and untaught, expoſed to ev'ry ill,
Heav'n found ſome hero to protect me ſtill;
Great Condé firſt my ſteps to glory train'd,
Next my good cauſe Coligny's arm ſuſtain'd:
Coligny, gracious queen! if Europe ſee
A virtue worthy her regard in me,
If Rome herſelf confeſs my youthful days
Not unrenown'd, Coligny's be the praiſe.

He was ſlain after the battle of Jarnac by Monteſquiou, captain of the guard to the Duke of Anjou, (afterwards Henry III.) The Count of Soiſſons ſon of the deceaſed, ſought diligently after Monteſquiou and his relations, that he might ſacrifice them to his vengeance.

Line 112. Gaſpard de Coligny, admiral of France, the ſon of Gaſpard de Coligny, marſhal of France, and of Louiſa de Montmorenci, ſiſter of the conſtable, born at Chatillon Feb. 16, 1516. Vid. the following remarks.

Early I learn'd beneath his eye to bear
A ſoldier's hardſhips in the ſchool of war;
His great example my ambition fir'd,
His counſel form'd me, and his deeds inſpir'd.
I ſaw him gray in arms, yet undiſmay'd,
The gen'ral cauſe reclining on his aid;
Dear to his friends, reſpected by the foe,
Firm in all ſtates, majeſtic tho' in woe;
Expert alike in battle and retreat,
More glorious, ev'n more awful in defeat,
Than Gaſton or Dunois in all the pride
Of war, with France and fortune at their ſide.

Ten years elaps'd of battles loſt and won,
Still on the field our well-arm'd legions ſhone;
With grief the queen her barren trophies view'd,
Our hardy troops, tho' vanquiſh'd, unſubdued,
And at one ſtroke, one fatal ſtroke ordain'd
To ſweep the civil fury from the land.
Sudden new counſels in her court prevail'd,
And peace was offer'd, when the ſword had fail'd.
Peace! be thou witneſs heav'n's avenging pow'r!
That treach'rous olive how it bluſh'd with gore;
Gods! is it then ſo hard a taſk to ſtray,
And ſhall their monarchs teach mankind the way?

True

True to his ſov'reign ſtill, devoutly true
Tho' he oppos'd her, to his country too,
Coligny ſiez'd the happy hour to heal
Her bleeding int'reſts, with a patriot's zeal.
Undaunted thro' ſurrounding foes he preſs'd,
(Suſpicions ſeldom haunt a hero's breaſt)
Nor ſtaid, till in her own auguſt abode,
Full in the midſt before the queen we ſtood.
With circling arms and flowing tears ſhe ſtrove
To laviſh o'er me ev'n a mother's love;
Coligny's friendſhip was her deareſt choice,
Still to be rul'd by his unerring voice;
Wealth, pow'r, and honour at his feet ſhe lay'd,
Her ſon's indulgence to our hopes diſplay'd,
Vain flatt'ring hopes alas! and quickly fled.
All were not blinded by this ſpecious ſhew
Of cordial grace and bounty from the foe.
But Charles, ſtill anxious to inſure ſucceſs,
More bounteous ſeem'd, as they believ'd him leſs.
Train'd up in falſhood from his earlieſt youth,
He held eternal enmity with truth;
From infant years had treaſur'd in his heart
The pois'nous precepts of his mother's art;
And fierce by nature, mercileſs and proud,
With eaſe was ripen'd to the work of blood.

More deeply ſtill to veil the dark deſign,
By nuptial bands he made his ſiſter mine.
Oh bands accurſt, and Hymen's rites profan'd,
By heaven in anger for our curſe ordain'd,
Whoſe baleful torch, dire omen of our doom,
Blaz'd but to lead me to a mother's tomb.
Tho' I have ſuffer'd let me ſtill be juſt,
Nor blame thee, Medicis, but where I muſt,
Suſpicions, tho' on reaſon firmly built,
I ſcorn, nor need them to enhance thy guilt.
But Albret died—forgive theſe tears I ſhed,
Due to the fond remembrance of the dead.
Mean while the dreadful hour in ſwift career,
Big with the queen's vindictive wrath, drew near.
Nights gloomy mantle thrown o'er earth and heav'n,
Silent and ſtill th'appointed ſign was giv'n.
The moon's pale regent faulter'd on her way,
And ſick'ning ſeem'd to quench her feeble ray.

Line 167. Margaret of Valois, ſiſter of Charles IX. was married to Henry IV. in 1572, few days before the maſſacre.

Line 172. Jeanne d'Albret, mother of Henry IV. who was drawn to Paris with the reſt of the Huguenots, died almoſt ſuddenly between the marriage of her ſon and the feaſt of St. Bartholomew; but Caillart her phyſician, and Deſnæuds her ſurgeon, both zealous Proteſtants, who opened her body, found no marks of poiſon upon it.

Line 182. It was on the night between the 23d and 24th of Auguſt, being the feaſt of St. Bartholomew in 1572, where this bloody tragedy was executed.

Coligny

Coligny ſlept, and largely o'er his head
The drowſy pow'r had all his influence ſhed.
Sudden unnumber'd ſhrieks diſpell'd the charm,
His rallying ſenſes felt the dread alarm;
He wak'd, look'd forth, and ſaw th'aſſaſſin throng
With murd'rous ſtrides march haſtily along:
Saw on their arms the quiv'ring torch-light play,
His palace fir'd, a nation in diſmay,
His bleeding houſhold ſtifled in the flames,
While all the ſavage hoſt around exclaims,
"Let no compaſſion check your righteous hands,
"'Tis God, 'tis Medicis, 'tis Charles commands.
Now his own name ſhrill ecchoing rends the ſkies,
And now far off Teligny he deſcries,
Teligny, fam'd for ev'ry virtuous grace,
Whoſe truth had earn'd his daughter's chaſte embrace,
Hope of his cauſe, and honour of his race.
The bleeding youth by ruffians force convey'd,
With outſtretch'd arms demands his inſtant aid.

Line 197. The count de Teligny, ten months before, had married the daughter of the admiral. He had ſo much ſweetneſs in his countenance, that they who came firſt to kill him relented at the ſight, but others more barbarous did the buſineſs.

Helpleſs, unarm'd, he ſaw his fate decreed,
Saw that his blood muſt unreveng'd be ſhed;
Yet bravely anxious for renown atchiev'd,
Wiſh'd but to die the hero he had liv'd.

Already the tumultuous band explore
His own receſs, and thunder at the door.
Inſtant he flings it wide, and meets the foe
With eye untroubled, and majeſtic brow,
Such as in battle with delib'rate breaſt,
Serene, he urged the ſlaughter, or repreſs'd.

Awful and ſage he ſtood, his gracious form
Quell'd the loud tumult, and controul'd the ſtorm.
Finiſh, my friends, your fatal taſk, he ſaid,
Bathe in my freezing blood this hoary head,
Theſe locks, which yet full many a boiſt'rous year
Ev'n the rough chance of war has deign'd to ſpare.
Strike, and ſtrike deep; be ſatisfied and know
With my laſt breath I can forgive the blow,
The mean deſire of life my ſoul abjures,
Yet happier! might I die, defending yours.

The ſavage band grown human at his words,
Claſping his knees let fall their idle ſwords;

Prone

Prone on the ground his pard'ning grace implore,
And at his feet repentant ſorrows pour;
He in the midſt, like ſome lov'd monarch roſe,
Theme of his ſubject's praiſe, and idol of their vows.

When Beſme, impatient for his deſtin'd prey,
Ruſh'd headlong in, enrag'd at their delay;
Furious he ſaw the deed unfiniſh'd yet,
And each aſſaſſin trembling at his feet.
No change in him this ſcene of ſorrow wrought,
Hard and unfeeling ſtill; the caitiff thought,
Whoe'er relented at Coligny's fate,
Was the queen's foe, a rebel to the ſtate.
Athwart the croud he breaks impetuous way,
Firm ſtands the chief, unconſcious of diſmay,
Deep in his ſide the fierce Barbarian ſtruck
The fatal ſteel, but with averted look,
Left at a glance that eye's reſiſtleſs charm
Should freeze his purpoſe, and unnerve his arm.
Such was the brave Coligny's mournful end;
Affront and outrage ev'n his death attend,

Line 229. Beſme was a German, a domeſtic of the houſe of Guiſe. This wretch being afterwards taken by the Proteſtants, the Rochellers offered a price for him that they might tear him to pieces in the great ſquare, but he was killed by a perſon named Bretanville.

The

The rav'ning hawk and vultur hover round
His mangled limbs, ſtill feſt'ring on the ground.
At the queen's feet his ſacred head is thrown,
A conqueſt worthy both herſelf and ſon.
With brow una'ter'd and ſerene ſhe ſate,
Nor ſeem'd t'enjoy the victim of her hate;
To veil her ſecret thoughts ſo well ſhe knew,
Such preſents ſeem'd familliar to her view.

Vain were the taſk and endleſs to recite
Each horrid ſcene of that diſaſt'rous night;
Coligny's death ſerv'd only to preſage
Our future woes, an earneſt of their rage.
Legions of bigots, flush'd with fiery zeal
And frantic ardour, ſhake the murth'ring ſteel;
Proudly they march where heaps of ſlaughter riſe,
Unfated vengeance ſparkling in their eyes.
Guiſe in the van full many a victim paid
Indignant, to his father's injur'd ſhade;

Line 244. They ſuſpended the admiral by the feet with an iron-chain to the gibbet of Montfaucon. Charles IX. went, together with his court, to enjoy this horrid ſpectacle. One of his courtiers ſaying that the body of Coligny had an ill ſmell, the king anſwered like Vitellius, the body of an enemy ſlain ſmells always well.

Line 261. This was Henry duke of Guiſe, ſirnamed Balafré, who was ſlain at Blois: the brother of duke Francis, who was aſſaſſinated by Poltrot.

Their

Their leaders animate the troops aloud,
And chafe to madneſs the deluded crowd;
Long regiſters of deaths foredoom'd diſplay,
And guide the poignard to it's deſtin'd prey.

The tumult I omit, the deaf'ning ſcreams,
The blood that floated in promiſcuous ſtreams;
How on his father's coarſe ſtruck rudely down,
Convulſed with anguiſh fell th'expiring ſon;
How when the flames had ſplit the mould'ring wall,
It cruſh'd the cradled infant in it's fall:
Events like theſe we view with leſs ſurprize,
For ſtill they mark the track where human frenzy flies.
But ſtranger far, what few will e'er believe
In future ages, or yourſelf conceive,
The barb'rous rout, whoſe hearts with added fire,
Thoſe holy ſavages, their prieſts inſpire;
Ev'n from the carnage call upon the Lord,
And waving high in air the reeking ſword,
Offer aloud to God the ſacrifice abhorr'd.
What num'rous heroes in that havock died!
Renel and brave Pardaillan by his ſide,

Line 283. Anthony of Clermont-Renel, as he was ſaving himſelf in his ſhirt, was maſſacred by the ſon of the Baron des Adrets, and by his own couſin, Buſſy d'Amboiſe. The marquis of Pardaillan was ſlain at his ſide.

Guerchy

Guerchy and wife Lavardin, worthy well
A longer life and gentler fortune, fell.
Among the wretches, whom that night of woe
Plunged in the gloom of endleſs night below,
Marſillac and Soubiſe mark'd down to death,
Defended ſtoutly their devoted breath,
'Till all with labour wearied and foredone,
Cloſe to the Louvre's gate puſh'd roughly on,
While to their king with ſuppliant voice they cry,
Deaf to their pray'rs, he hears not, and they die.

High on the roof the royal fury ſtood,
At leiſure feaſting on the ſcenes of blood,
Her cruel minions watch the gloomy hoſt,
And mark the ſpot where ſlaughter rages moſt;
Brave chiefs! triumphant only in their ſhame,
They ſaw their country blaze, and gloried in the flame.

Oh

Line 284. Guerchy defended himſelf a long time in the ſtreet, and ſlew many of the aſſaſſins 'till he was overpowered by numbers; but the marquis of Lavardin had not time to draw his ſword.

Line 288. Marſillac, Count Rochfoncault, was a favourite of Charles IX. and had ſpent part of the night with him. The king had ſome inclination to ſave him, and had himſelf commanded *him to ſleep in the Louvre*; but at length he let him depart, ſaying, *I ſee plainly it* is God's will that he ſhould periſh.

Soubiſe

Oh ſcandal to the name of king rever'd!
Himſelf, the monarch, joins the felon herd;
Himſelf the trembling fugitives perſues,
And ev'n his ſacred hands in blood imbrues.
This Valois too, whoſe cauſe I now ſupport,
Who comes by me, a ſuppliant to your court,
Shar'd in his brother's guilt an impious part,
And rouſed the flames of vengeance in his heart;
Nor yet is Valois fierce, of ſavage mood,
Or prone by nature to delight in blood;
But on his youth thoſe dire examples wrought,
And weakneſs, more than malice, was his fault.

A few there were whom vengeance ſought in vain,
Who 'ſcap'd unhurt among the thouſands ſlain.
Caumont! thy fortune, thy auſpicious fate,
Ages unborn with wonder ſhall relate.

Soubiſe was ſo called becauſe he had married the heireſs of that family. His own name was Dupont-Quellence. He defended himſelf a long time, and fell covered with wounds under the queen's window. The ladies flock'd thither to ſee his body, naked and bloody as it was, with a ſavage curioſity, worthy of that abominable court.

Line 300. I have heard the laſt marſhal of Feſſé aſſert, that in his youth he knew an old man 90 years of age, who had been page to Charles IX. and who had often told him, that he himſelf loaded the carabine with which the king fired upon his Proteſtant ſubjects, the night of St. Bartholomew.

Line 314. De Caumont, who eſcaped the maſſacre, was the famous marſhal de la Force, who afterwards gained ſuch great reputation, and lived to the age of fourſcore and four years.

To

The hoary ſire between his ſons repoſed,
His aged eyes in needful ſlumber cloſed,
One bed ſufficed them all; when ruſhing in
The fell deſtroyers mar the peaceful ſcene,
With haſty ſtrokes their poignards plunging round,
They deal a random death at ev'ry wound.
But he, whoſe mercies o'er our fate preſide,
Can waft with eaſe the threat'ning hour aſide;
Through very zeal to ſlay, they ſpare the ſon,
And not a trace of miſchief reach'd Caumont.
A hand unſeen was ſtretch'd in his defence,
And ſcreen'd from harm his infant innocence;
Pierced with a thouſand murthers, to their force
His father ſtill oppoſed his bleeding corſe,
And a whole nation's ardour to deſtroy
Eluding, twice gave being to his boy.

Me to ſweet ſleep reſign'd, and balmy reſt,
No fear alarm'd, no jealouſy poſſeſs'd;
Deep in the Louvre at that dreadful hour,
Far from the din of arms I ſlept ſecure:
But oh! what ſcenes my waking eyes ſurvey'd,
Grim death in all his horrid pomp array'd,
Porches and Porticos were deluged o'er,
With crimſon ſtreams, and ſtood in pools of gore;

My friends ſtill bleeding, my domeſtics ſlain,
The trueſt, beſt, and dearest of thy train.
Already at my bed the villains ſtand
Prepar'd, already lift the murth'ring hand;
My life hangs wav'ring on a point, I wait
The final ſtroke, and yield me to my fate.

But whether rev'rence of their ancient lords,
The blood of Bourbon, check'd their daring ſwords;
Whether ingenious to torment, the queen
Held Henry's life a ſacrifice too mean;
Or wiſely ſpared it, to ſecure alone
In future ſtorms, a ſhelter for her own;
Inſtead of death, at once to ſet me free,
Chains and a dungeon were her ſtern decree.

Far happier was the fate Coligny ſhar'd,
His life alone her treach'rous arts enſnar'd,
The hero's freedom ſtill, and glory unimpar'd.
I ſee Eliza ſhares in the diſtreſs,
Though half the ſad recital I ſuppreſs.
It ſeem'd as from the queen's malignant eye
All France had caught the ſignal to deſtroy;
Swift from the capital on ev'ry ſide
Death o'er the kingdom ſtretch'd his banners wide.

Kings in their vengeance are too well obey'd;
Whole armies blindly lend their impious aid;
France floats in blood, and all her rivers sweep
Upon their purple tides, the carnage to the deep.

THE

THE

HENRIADE.

CANTO the THIRD.

THE ARGUMENT.

The hero continues the hiſtory of the civil wars of France. *The unfortunate death of* Charles IX. *Reign of* Henry III. *His character. That of the famous duke of* Guiſe, *known by the name of* Balafrè. *Battle of* Coutras. *Murder of the duke of* Guiſe. *Extremities to which* Henry III. *is reduc'd.* Mayenne *at the head of the league.* D'Aumale *the hero of it. Reconciliation of* Henry III. *and* Henry *king of* Navarre. *Queen* Elizabeth's *anſwer to* Henry *of* Bourbon.

THE HENRIADE.

CANTO the THIRD.

WHEN many a day (for thus the fates ordain'd)
With blackeſt deeds of murder had been ſtain'd;
When each aſſaſſin cruel, and abhorr'd,
Fatigu'd with crimes, had ſheath'd his glutted ſword;
Thoſe crimes at length the factious crowd alarm'd
Whom zeal had blinded, and their ſov'reign arm'd.
As rage ſubſided, melting pity mov'd
Each friend to virtue who his country lov'd;
Her plaintive voice awaken'd ſofter cares,
And Charles himſelf relented at her tears.
That early culture, by ill fate deſign'd
To blaſt the fairer bloſſoms of his mind,
Conſcience ſubdued;—her whiſp'ring voice alone
Can ſhake with terror the ſecureſt throne.

Not all his mother's principles cou'd frame
A heart like her's, inſenſible of ſhame.
Severe remorſe his anxious ſoul diſmay'd,
His ſtrength was waſted, and his youth decay'd.
Heav'n mark'd him out in vengeance for his crimes
A dread example to ſucceeding times.
*Myſelf was preſent at his lateſt breath,
And ſtill I ſhudder at that ſcene of death,
When, in return for tides of Gallic blood,
Each burſting vein pour'd forth the crimſon flood.
Thus fell lamented in his early prime
A youthful monarch bred to ev'ry crime,
From whoſe repentance we had hop'd to gain
The balmy bleſſings of a milder reign.
Soon as he died, with ſpeed advancing forth
From the bleak boſom of the wintry north
Great Valois came, like ſome bright orient ſtar,
To claim his birth-right in theſe realms of war.
On him † Polonia had beſtow'd her throne,
Deem'd by each province worthy of the crown.

* He never enjoyed his health after the affair of St. Bartholomew, and died about two years afterwards, May 30, 1574. cover'd with his own blood, which guſh'd out from ev'ry pore.

† The reputation he had acquired at Jarnac and Montcontour, ſupported by French coin, had gained him the election as king of Poland in the year 1573. He ſucceeded Sigiſmond II. the laſt prince of the race of the Jagellons.

Great

Great are the dangers of too bright a name,
E'en Valois ſunk beneath the weight of fame:
Tho' in his cauſe each danger I defy,
Cou'd toil for ever, and with tranſport die,
Yet, heav'n-born truth, this tongue thy accents loves,
And only praiſes what the heart approves.
Soon was the race of all his greatneſs run;
As morning vapours fly before the ſun.
Oft' have I mark'd theſe changes, often ſeen,
Heroes, and kings become the weakeſt men:
Have ſeen the laurell'd prince in battle brave
Wear the ſoft chain, and live a courtier's ſlave.
This fact by long experience have I known,
Seeds of true courage in the mind are ſown.
Valois was form'd by heav'ns peculiar care
For martial proweſs, and the deeds of war:
Yet was too weak the rod of pow'r to wield,
Tho' great in arms, and ſteady in the field.
Deteſted minions ſhew'd their artful ſkill,
And reign'd ſupreme the ſov'reigns of his will.
His voice but dictated their own decrees;
Whilſt they, indulging in voluptuous eaſe,
Drank of each joy which luxury ſupplies,
And ſcorn'd to liſten to a nation's cries.

Unmov'd beheld afflicted France lament
Her ſtrength exhauſted, and her treaſures ſpent.
Beneath their yoke whilſt Valois tamely bow'd,
And new oppreſſions from new taxes flow'd,
Lo* Guiſe appears! ambition ſpurs him on,
All eyes are fix'd upon this riſing ſun.
His deeds of war, the glory of his race,
His manly beauty, and attractive grace;
But more than all, that happy, pleaſing art,
Which wins our love, and ſteals upon the heart,
Subdued e'en thoſe whom virtue faintly warms,
And gain'd their wiſhes by reſiſtleſs charms.
None e'er like him cou'd lead the mind aſtray,
Or rule the paſſions with more ſov'reign ſway.
None e'er conceal'd from buſy, curious eyes,
Their dark intentions in ſo fair diſguiſe.
Tho' proud ambition kindled in his ſoul,
His cooler judgement cou'd that pride controul.
To gain the crowd, and win deſerv'd eſteem,
Deteſted levies were his daily theme.
Oft' have they heard his flatt'ring tongue declare
The public ſorrows were his only care.

* Henry of Guiſe; ſir named Balafré; born in the year 1550, of Francis de Guiſe, and Ann d'Eſt. He executed the grand project of the league formed by his uncle, the Cardinal of Lorrain, and begun by Francis his father.

On

On modeſt worth he laviſh'd all his ſtore,
Or cloth'd the naked, or enrich'd the poor.
Oft' would his alms prevent the ſtarting tear,
And tell that Guiſe, and charity were near.
All arts were tried which cunning might afford,
To court the nobles whom his ſoul abhorr'd.
Alike to virtue, as to vice inclin'd,
Or love, or endleſs hatred rul'd his mind.
He brav'd all dangers which on arms await,
No chief more bold, none more oppreſs'd the ſtate.
When time at length had made his influence ſtrong,
And fix'd the paſſions of the giddy throng;
Stripp'd of diſguiſe unmaſk'd the traitor ſtone,
Defied his ſov'reign, and attack'd the throne.
Within our walls the fatal league began,
And next thro' France the dire contagion ran.
Nurs'd by all ranks the hideous monſter ſtood,
Pregnant with woes, and rioting in blood.
Two monarchs rul'd o'er Gallia's hapleſs land:
This ſhar'd alone the ſhadow of command;
That wide diffus'd fierce wars deſtructive flame,
Maſter of all things ſave the royal name.
Valois awak'd the threat'ning danger ſees,
And quits the ſlumbers of lethargic eaſe.

But ſtill to eaſe, and indolence a prey,
His eyes are dazzled by the blaze of day.
Tho' o'er his head the ſtormy thunders rowl,
Nor ſtorms, nor thunders rouze his ſluggiſh ſoul.
Sweet to his taſte the ſtreams of pleaſure flow,
And ſleep conceals the precipice below.
Myſelf remain'd, the next ſucceeding heir,
To ſave the monarch, or his ruin ſhare:
Eager I flew his weakneſs to ſupply;
Firmly reſolv'd to conquer, or to die.
But Guiſe, alas! that ſly, diſſembling fiend,
By craft depriv'd him of his trueſt friend.
That old pretence thro' all revolving time,
Divine religion, veil'd the horrid crime.
The buſy crowd fictitious virtue warm'd,
With zeal inſpir'd them, and with fury arm'd.
Before their eyes in lively tints he drew,
That ancient worſhip which their fathers knew.
From new-born ſects declar'd what ills had flow'd,
And painted Bourbon as a foe to God.
Thro' all your climes, forbid it heav'n! he ſaid,
His tenets flouriſh, and his errors ſpread.
Yon walls, that caſt a ſacred horror round,
Will ſoon be ſunk, and levell'd with the ground.

Soon

Soon will you ſee unhallow'd temples riſe,
And point their airy ſummits to the ſkies.
So lov'd by Bourbon, ſo ador'd has been
The curſt example of Britannia's queen.
Scarce had he ſpoke, when lo! the public fear
Was ſwiftly wafted to the royal ear.
Nay more, the leaguers iſſue Rome's decree,
And curſe the monarch that unites with me.
Now was this arm prepar'd to ſtrike the blow,
Pour forth it's ſtrength, and thunder on the foe;
When Valois, won by ſubtle, dark intrigue,
Fix'd on my ruin, and obey'd the league.
Unnumber'd ſoldiers arm'd in dread array
Fill'd ev'ry plain, and ſpoke the king's diſmay.
With grief I ſaw ſuch jealouſy diſclos'd,
Bewail'd his weakneſs, and his pow'r oppos'd.
A thouſand ſtates were laviſh of ſupplies,
Each paſſing hour beheld new armies riſe,
Led on by fierce Joyeuſe, and well inſtructed Guiſe.
Guiſe, form'd alike for prudence as for war,
Diſpers'd my friends, and baffl'd all their care.
Still undiſmay'd, ſuch ſtrength my valour boaſts,
I preſs'd thro' myriads of embattl'd hoſts.
Thro' all the field I ſought the proud Joyeuſe;
But ſtay—the reſt Eliza will excuſe.

More of that chief 'twere needleſs to relate,
You've heard his end, and fame has ſpread his fate.
"Not ſo,—the queen with eagerneſs replied,
"Well haſt thou ſpoke with modeſty thy guide;
"But deign to tell me what I wiſh to hear,
"Such themes are worthy of Eliza's ear:
"Joyeuſe his fall in vivid colours draw;
"Go on, and paint thy conqueſt at Coutras."
Touch'd with theſe words the hero ſunk his head;
An honeſt bluſh his manly cheek o'erſpread.
Pauſing a while, the tale he thus led on,
Yet wiſh'd the glory any but his own.
Of all, who Valois cou'd by flatt'ry move,
Who nurs'd his weakneſs, and enjoy'd his love;
Joyeuſe illuſtrious beſt deſerv'd to ſhare
The faireſt ſunſhine of his royal care.
If to his years the ſtern decree of fate
Had fix'd ſome period of a longer date,
In noble exploits had his virtue ſhone,
And Guiſe's greatneſs not excell'd his own,
But vice o'er virtue gain'd ſuperior force,
Court was his cradle, luxury his nurſe:
Yet dar'd the am'rous chieftain to oppoſe
Unſkilful valour to experienc'd foes.

From

From pleaſure's downy lap the courtiers came
To guard his perſon, and to ſhare his fame.

In gay attire each gallant youth was dreſt;
Some cypher glitter'd on each martial veſt.
Some dear diſtinction, ſuch as lovers wear,
To tell the fondneſs of the yielding fair.
The coſtly ſapphire, or the diamonds rays,
O'er their rich armour ſhed the vivid blaze.
Thus deck'd by folly, thus elate and vain,
Theſe troops of Venus iſſued to the plain.
Swift march'd their ranks, as tumult led the way,
Unwiſely brave, and impotently gay.
In Bourbon's camp, diſdaining empty ſhew,
Far other ſcenes were open'd to the view:
An army, ſilent as the dead of night,
Diſplay'd it's forces well inur'd to fight;
Men gray in arms, and diſciplin'd to blood,
Who bravely ſuffer'd for their country's good.
The only graces, that employ'd their care,
Were ſword's well pointed, and the dreſs of war.
Like them array'd, and ſteady to my truſt,
I led the ſquadrons cover'd o'er with duſt.
Like them ten thouſand deaths I dar'd to face,
Diſtinguiſh'd only by my rank, and place.

Theſe

Theſe eyes beheld the brilliant foe o'erthrown,
Expiring legions, and the field our own.
Deep in their breaſts I plung'd the fatal ſpear,
And wiſh'd ſome Spaniſh boſom had been there.
Still ſhall my tongue their honeſt praiſes tell;
Firm in his poſt each youthful courtier fell,
And bravely ſtruggl'd to his lateſt breath
Amid'ſt the terrors of ſurrounding death.
Our ſilken ſons of pleaſure, and of eaſe,
Preſerve their valour in the mid'ſt of peace.
Call'd forth to war, they bravely ſcorn to yield,
Servile at court, but heroes in the field.
Joyeuſe, alas! I tried, in vain, to ſave;
None heard the orders which my mercy gave.
Too ſoon I ſaw him ſunk to endleſs night,
Suſtain'd by kind aſſociates in the fight,
A pale, and breathleſs corſe, all ghaſtly to the ſight.
Thus ſome fair ſtem, whoſe op'ning flow'rs diſplay
Their fragrant boſoms to the dawn of day,
Which decks the early ſcene, and freſh appears
With zephyrs kiſſes, and Aurora's tears,
Too ſoon decays, on nature's lap reclin'd,
Crop't by the ſcythe, or ſcatter'd by the wind.
But why ſhoud memory recall to view
Thoſe horrid triumphs to oblivion due?

Conqueſts

Conqueſts ſo gain'd for ever ceaſe to charm,
Whilſt Gallic blood ſtill bluſhes on my arm.
Thoſe beams of grandeur with falſe luſtre ſhone,
And tears bedew the laurels which I won.
Unhappy Valois! that ill fated day
Show'r'd down on thee diſhonour, and diſmay.
Paris grew proud, the league's ſubmiſſion leſs,
And Guiſe's glory doubled thy diſtreſs.
Vimori's plains ſaw Guiſe the ſword unſheath,
Germania ſuffer'd for Joyeuſe's death.
Auneau beheld my army of allies
Yield to his pow'r, defeated by ſurprize.
Thro' Paris ſtreets he march'd with haughty air,
Array'd in laurels, and the pride of war.
Even Valois tamely to his inſults bow'd,
And ſerv'd this idol of the gazing crow'd.
Shame will at length the cooleſt courage warm,
And give new vigor to the weakeſt arm.
Such vile affronts made Valois leſs incline
To offer incenſe at ſo mean a ſhrine.
Too late he tried his greatneſs to reſtore,
And reign the monarch he had liv'd before.
Now deem'd a tyrant by the factious crew,
Nor loyal fear, nor love his ſubjects knew.

All Paris arms, ſedition ſpreads the flame,
And headſtrong mutiny aſſerts her claim.
Encircling troops raiſe high the hoſtile mound,
Beſiege his palace, and his guards ſurround.
Guiſe undiſturb'd, amidſt the raging ſtorm,
Gave it a milder, or ſeverer form:
Rul'd the mad tumult of rebellious ſpleen,
And guided, as he pleas'd, the great machine.
All had been loſt; and Valois doom'd to die
By one command, one glance of Guiſe's eye;
But, when each arm was ready for the blow,
Compaſſion ſooth'd the fierceneſs of the foe;
Enough were deem'd the terrors of the fight,
And meek-eyed pity gave the pow'r of flight.
Guiſe greatly err'd, ſuch ſubjects all things dare,
Their king muſt periſh, or themſelves deſpair.
This day confirm'd, and ſtrengthen'd in his ſchemes,
He ſaw that all was fatal but extremes:
Himſelf muſt mount the ſcaffold, or the throne,
The lord of all things, or the lord of none.
Thro' Gallia's realms ador'd, from conqueſt vain,
Aided by Rome, and ſeconded by Spain;
Pregnant with hope, and abſolute in pow'r,
He thought thoſe iron ages to reſtore,

When

When erſt our kings in mould'ring cloiſters liv'd,
In early infancy of crowns depriv'd.
In hallow'd ſhades they wept the hours away,
Whilſt tyrants govern'd with oppreſſive ſway.
Valois, indignant at ſo high a crime,
Delay'd his vengeance to ſome better time.
Our ſtates at Blois were ſummon'd to appear,
And fame, no doubt, has told you what they were.
In barren ſtreams from 'oratory's tongue
Smooth flow'd the tide of eloquence along;
Laws were propos'd whoſe pow'r none e'er perceiv'd,
And ills lamented which none e'er reliev'd.

Guiſe in the mid'ſt, with high imperious pride,
Was vainly ſeated by his ſov'reign's ſide.
Sure of ſucceſs, he ſaw around the throne,
Or thought he ſaw, no ſubjects but his own.
Theſe ſons of infamy, this venal band
Was ready to beſtow the dear command,
When Valois pow'r was deſtin'd to appear,
And burſt the chains of mercy and of fear.
Each day his rival ſtudied to attain
The mean, the odious triumphs of diſdain;
Nor deem'd that ever ſuch a prince cou'd ſhew
Thoſe ſtern reſolves which ſtrike th' aſſaſſin's blow.

Fate

Fate o'er his eyes with envious hand had ſpread
Her thickeſt veil's impenetrable ſhade.
The hour arriv'd when Guiſe was doom'd to bear
That lot of nature which all mortals ſhare.
Diſgrac'd with wounds before the royal eye
The mighty victim was condemn'd to die.
All pale, and cover'd by the crimſon tide,
This ſun deſcended in his native pride.
The parting ſoul, by thirſt of glory fir'd,
In life's laſt moments to the throne aſpir'd.
*Thus fell the pow'rful chief, aſſemblage rare
Of fouleſt vices, and perfections fair.
With other conduct, than to kings belongs,
Did Valois ſuffer, and revenge his wrongs.
Soon did the dire report thro' Paris ſpread,
That heav'n was injur'd, and that Guiſe was dead.
The young, the old with unavailing ſighs
Diſplay'd their grief, and join'd their plaintive cries.
The ſofter ſex invok'd the pow'rs above,
And claſp'd his ſtatues in the arms of love.
All Paris thought her father, and her God
Call'd loud for vengeance, and inſpir'd to blood.

* He was aſſaſſinated in the king's antichamber at Blois, on Friday the 23d of December, 1588.

Artful'ſt

Amid'ſt the reſt, the brave and valiant Mayne
Sought not their zealous fury to reſtrain:
But more by int'reſt, than reſentment mov'd,
The flame augmented, and their zeal approv'd.
Mayne, under Guiſe inur'd to wars alarms,
Was nurs'd in battle, and train'd up to arms:
His brother's equal in each dark intrigue,
And now the lord, and glory of the league.
Thus highly rais'd, thus eminently great;
He griev'd no longer for his brother's fate:
But better pleas'd to govern, than obey,
Forgot the loſs, and wip'd his tears away.
Mayne, with a ſoul to gen'rous deeds inclin'd,
A ſtateſman's cunning, and a hero's mind,
By ſubtle arts unnumber'd followers draws
To yield him homage, and to ſerve his laws.
Skilful e'en good from evil to produce,
Full well he knows their talents, and their uſe.
Tho' brighter ſplendors dazzl'd all our eyes,
Not greater dangers ever roſe from Guiſe.
To young Aumale, and this more prudent guide,
The leaguers owe their courage, and their pride.
Aumale, the *great invincible* by name,
Is high exalted in the lifts of fame.

Thro'

Thro' all their ranks he ſpreads ambition's fires,
Preſumptuous valour, and his own deſires.
Unſhaken in their cauſe the league protects,
And bravely executes what Mayne directs.

Meantime, the king, whoſe pow'r the Germans dread,
To deeds inhuman from his cradle bred;
That tyrant catholick, that artful foe,
Incens'd at Bourbon, and Eliza too:
Ambitious Philip, ſends his warlike train
To aid our rivals, and the cauſe of Mayne.
Rome, beſt employ'd in making wars to ceaſe,
Lights diſcord's torch, and bids her fires increaſe.
The ſame fierce views the chriſtian father owns,
Points the keen blade, and animates his ſons.
From Europe's either end the torrent falls:
Uniting ſorrows burſt upon our walls.
Weak, and defenceleſs in this evil hour
Valois relented, and implor'd my pow'r.
Humane benevolence my ſoul approves,
The ſtate commiſerates, and Valois loves.
Impending dangers baniſh all my ire,
A brother's ſafety is my ſole deſire.

With

With honeſt zeal I labour for his good:
'Tis duty calls me, and the ties of blood.
I know the royal dignity my own,
And vindicate the honors of the crown.
Nor treaty made, nor hoſtage aſk'd I came,
And told him, courage was his guide to fame.
On Paris' ramparts bid him caſt his eye,
And there reſolve to conquer, or to die.
Theſe friendly words, thus happily applied,
Thro' all his ſoul diffus'd a gen'rous pride.
Manners thus chang'd thus reſolutely brave
The ſenſe of ſhame, and not example gave.
The ſerious leſſons, which misfortune brings,
Are needful often, and of uſe to kings.

Thus Henry ſpoke with honeſty of heart,
And begg'd for ſuccours on Eliza's part.
Now from the tow'rs where rebel diſcord ſtood,
Conqueſt recalls him to her ſcenes of blood.
The flow'r of England follows to the plain,
And cleaves the boſom of the azure main.
Eſſex commands,—the proud Iberian knows
That Eſſex conquers e'en the wiſeſt foes:
Full little deeming that injurious fate
Should blaſt his laurels with her keeneſt hate.

To France brave Henry haſtens to repair,
Eager to grace the theatre of war.
Go, ſaid the queen, thyſelf, and virtue pleaſe;
My troops attend thee o'er the azure ſeas.
For thee, not Valois they endure the fight;
Thy cares muſt guard them, and defend their right.
From thy example will they ſcorn to ſwerve;
And rather ſeem to imitate, than ſerve.
Who now the ſword for valiant Bourbon draws
Will learn to triumph in Britannia's cauſe.
Oh! may they pow'r the factious leaguers quell,
And Mayne's allies thy gallant conqueſts feel!
Spain is too weak thy rebel foes to ſave,
And Roman thunders never awe the brave.
Go, free mankind, and break the iron chains
Where Sixtus governs, or where Philip reigns.
The cruel Philip, artful as his fire
In all that views of int'reſt may require,
Tho' leſs renown'd in war, leſs great, and brave,
Diviſions ſpreads in order to enſlave;
Forms in his palace each ambitious ſcheme,
And boundleſs triumphs are his darling theme.

Lo! Sixtus,* rais'd from nothing to the throne,
Deſigns more haughty bluſhes not to own.

* Pope Sixtus V. who from having been a ſhepherd's boy roſe to the Papal throne.

Mont Alto's ſhepherd monarchs wou'd o'ercome,
And dictate laws in Paris, as at Rome:
Safe in the honours which adorn his brow,
To Philip, and to all mankind a foe:
As ſerves his cauſe, or inſolent, or meek,
Rival of kings, and tyrant o'er the weak.
Thro' ev'ry clime, with faction at their head,
E'en to our court his dark intrigues have ſpread.
Theſe mighty rulers fear not to defy;
They both have dar'd Eliza's pow'r to try:
Witneſs, ye ſeas! how Philip fought in vain
With Engliſh valour, and the ſtormy main.
Theſe ſhores beheld the proud Armada loſt;
Yon purple billows bore the floating hoſt.
Rome's pontiff ſtill in quiet ſilence bears
The loſs of conqueſt, and our greatneſs fears.

Diſplay thy banners in the martial field;
When Mayne is conquer'd, Rome herſelf will yield.
Tho' proud when fortune ſmiles, her own defeat
Lays her ſubmiſſive at the victor's feet.
Prompt to condemn, and eager to abſolve,
Her flames, and thunders wait on thy reſolve.

THE

HENRIADE.

CANTO the FOURTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

D'Aumale *is upon the point of being maſter of* Henry *the third's camp, when the hero returning from* England, *engages the Leaguers and changes the fortune of the day.*

Diſcord *comforts* Mayenne, *and flies to* Rome *for ſuccours. Deſcription of* Rome. Diſcord *meets with* Policy. *She returns with her to* Paris, *cauſes an inſurrection of the* Sorbonne; *animates the ſixteen againſt the parliament, and arms the Monks. Troubles, and confuſion in* Paris.

THE

HENRIADE.

CANTO the FOURTH.

WHILE thus ſequeſter'd from the train of ſtate,
Their glorious int'reſts ſagely they debate,
At leiſure o'er the princely ſcience ſtray,
Combat and conqueſt and imperial ſway,
The Seine with terrour ſaw the chiefs combin'd,
Spread on his banks their banners to the wind.

Anxious the king, from Henry diſtant far,
Bewail'd th'uncertain deſtiny of war;
His cheering aid irreſolute he needs,
For vict'ry follows ſtill where Bourbon leads.
With triumph the confed'rate bands beheld
His weak diſmay, and eager ſought the field;
Chill'd ev'ry dreadful hour with freſh alarms,
He ſaw th'o'erwhelming torrent of their arms,

And prone to change, and haſty to repent,
Regrets his abſence whom himſelf had ſent.

Long with theſe traitors to their lawful lord,
Joyeuſes' brother drew the factious ſword;
By turns a ſoldier, and a ſaint was he,
Now all for arms, and now a devotee,
Preferr'd, as when inclin'd his various ſoul,
One hour the helmet, and the next the cowl.
He left the ſcenes of penitence and tears,
To bark ſedition in the Leaguer's ears,
And bath'd remorſeleſs in his country's blood,
The hand juſt then devoted to his God.

Of all the chiefs for valour moſt renown'd,
Whoſe proweſs ſhed deſpair and horror round,

Line 18. Henry, Count of Bouchage, younger brother of the duke of Joyeuſe, ſlain at Coutras.

Once as he was paſſing by the convent of the Capuchins at Paris, at four o'clock in the morning, after having ſpent the night in a debauch, he fancied he heard the angels ſinging matins in the convent. Struck with this idea, he made himſelf a Capuchin, by the name of *brother angel*. Afterwards, when he quitted the cowl, and took arms againſt Henry IV, the duke of Mayenne made him governor of Languedoc, duke and peer and marſhal of France. At length he came to an accommodation with the king: but as he was one day ſtanding with his majeſty in a balcony, under which a great multitude were aſſembled, the king ſaid to him, couſin, theſe people ſeem delighted with ſeeing an apoſtate and a renegate together. This ſpeech of Henry's ſent him again to his convent, where he died.

Whoſe

Whoſe puiſſant arms the boldeſt might appall,
The firſt in feats of glory was D'Aumale.
Sprung from the far—fam'd heroes of Lorrain,
King, laws, and peace alike were his diſdain;
The nobleſt youths his daring ſteps purſue,
With them inceſſant to the field he flew,
Now in ſtill march, now ſhouting from afar,
By day, by night he urged the various war,
Aſſail'd th'unguarded foe on ev'ry ſide,
And with their blood the duſty champian dyed.
So from proud Athos or Imau's heigth,
Where earth, ſea, air lie ſtretch'd before the ſight,
With headlong ſpeed the rapid eagle flies,
And vulturs dart along the gloomy ſkies;
With hungry beaks the feather'd ſpoil they rend,
Reſiſtleſs on the bleating flocks deſcend,
And ſoaring to their airy cliffs convey
With ſcreams of cruel joy, the living prey.

Fir'd on a time and frantick with the thirſt
Of glory, to the royal tent he pierced;

Line 30. The chevalier d'Aumale, brother of the duke d'Aumale, of the houſe of Lorrain, a young man of an impetuous ſpirit with many ſhining qualities; he headed all the ſallies during the ſiege of Paris, and inſpired the inhabitants with his own courage and confidence.

Dark was the night and ſudden the ſurpriſe,
Around the camp a pannick horror flies;
The torrent of his arms o'erlooks the mound,
And the big deluge threatens all around.
But when the day-ſtar rais'd his glimm'ring urn,
Came Mornay to announce his lord's return;
With joyful ſpeed th'impatient chief drew near,
When the rough din ſmote loudly on his ear,
Amaz'd he flies, ſees terror and diſtreſs
In the king's troops, nor ev'n in Bourbon's leſs,
"And are you vanquiſh'd, and is this," he cried,
"Is this the glorious welcome you provide
"For Henry, for your Henry?" at that name
Their hearts were fluſh'd again with valour's glowing flame.
So when the Sabin arms drove trembling home,
Ev'n to the capital, the bands of Rome,
His guardian God their mighty founder hail'd,
And in the name of Stator Jove prevail'd.
Let him, they cry, let Henry lead the fight,
And we muſt conquer in our Henry's ſight.
Keen as the flaſh that cleaves the ſtormy cloud,
In the mid camp the dazzling hero ſtood,
Impetuous to the foremoſt ranks he flies,
Death in his hand, and light'ning in his eyes,

Th'ambitious chiefs crowd faſt around his ſhield,
At once he ſhifts the fortune of the field,
His ſtern approach the pale confed'rates ſhun,
As ſtars diminiſh'd fade before the ſun.
D'Aumale enraged tries ev'ry art in vain
To rally their diſorder'd files again;
His voice a while their tim'rous flight with-held,
But Henry's drove them headlong o'er the field;
His awful front ſtrikes terror thro' the foe,
Their chief unites them, and their fears o'erthrow:
'Till ev'n D'Aumale reluctant born along
Obeys th'o'erwhelming torrent of the throng.
Incumber'd thus with many a winter's ſnow,
Some rock forſakes the mountain's lofty brow,
And wrapt in ſheets of ice, rolls o'er the vale below.

He ſhews to the beſieging pow'rs around
His front ſo long with matchleſs glory crown'd,
Burſts through the multitude, and loathing life,
Seeks in deſpair once more the mortal ſtrife;
Reſtrains a while the victor's rapid courſe,
'Till weak, and baffled by ſuperior force,
Each moment he expects the fatal meed,
Death, the juſt wages of his hardy deed.

But Diſcord, for her darling chief afraid,
Flies ſwift to ſave him, for ſhe needs his aid,
Between her champion and the foe, ſhe held
Her maſſy, broad, impenetrable ſhield,
Whoſe ſight, or rage, or terrour can convey,
Omen of death, and meteor of diſmay.
Offspring of Hell! from her infernal cave
Then firſt ſhe came, to ſuccour and to ſave,
Then firſt her hand, dire inſtrument of death,
Redeem'd from inſtant fate a hero's breath.
Forth from the field, her minion, cover'd o'er
With wounds unfelt amid his toil, ſhe bore,
His anguiſh with a lenient hand allay'd,
And ſtaunch'd the blood that in her cauſe was ſhed.
But while her labours to his limbs impart
Their wonted health, her venom taints his heart.
Thus tyrants oft, with treach'rous pity, ſtay
The wretches doom, and ſpare but to betray;
Act by his arm the purpoſe of their hate,
And dark revenge, then yield him to his fate.

Bold to atchieve, nor fraught with wiſdom leſs
To catch th' auſpicious moment of ſucceſs;

Victorious

Victorious Henry urg'd the important blow,
And with new fury preſs'd th' aſtoniſh'd foe.
Cloſe in their walls their dire diſgrace they mourn,
And dread th'aſſault, and tremble in their turn.
Ev'n Valois now, to martial deeds inſpir'd
The troops, himſelf by Henry's actions fir'd;
Laughs at all pain, deſpiſes all alarms,
And owns ev'n toil and danger have their charms.
No ſecret feuds the jarring chiefs confound,
Their brave attempts were all with glory crown'd;
Horrour, where'er they march, their way prepares,
The ramparts tremble, and the foe deſpairs.
Where now ſhall Mayne deep ſorrowing ſeek redreſs,
His troops, a people groaning in diſtreſs!
The weeping orphan here her ſire demands,
There brethren claim their brother at his hands;
Each mourns the preſent, dreads the future moſt,
And diſaffection rends the murm'ring hoſt.
Some counſel flight, ſurrender ſome prefer,
But all renounce unanimous the war;
So light the feeble vulgar, and ſo near
Their headſtrong raſhneſs is allied to fear.

Their ruin he beheld already wrought,
A thouſand plans perplex his lab'ring thought;
When Diſcord by her ſnaky locks confeſt,
Stood forth reveal'd and thus the chief addreſs'd.

Auguſt deſcendant of an awful line,
Whoſe vengeful cauſe unites thee firm to mine;
Form'd by my counſel, nurs'd beneath my care,
Know thy protectreſs, and her voice revere.
Shall wretches baſe as theſe thy fears excite,
Who freeze with horrour at a loſs ſo ſlight.
Slaves of my pow'r, and vaſſals of my will,
Ev'n now our great deſigns they ſhall fulfil;
Let but my breath their daſtard boſoms fire,
They court the combat, and with joy expire.

She ſpoke, and rapid as the light'nings flight,
Glanced through the clouds, and vaniſh'd from his ſight.
Around the French ſhe ſaw confuſion low'r,
And hail'd the ſight, and bleſs'd the welcome hour;
The teeming earth grew barren as ſhe paſs'd,
And the bright bloſſoms wither'd at the blaſt;
Flat in the furrow lies the blighted ear,
Pale and half quench'd the ſick'ning ſtars appear;

Beneath

Beneath her burſts the thunder's ſullen ſound,
And death-like horrour ſeized the nations round.

Dark ſcowling o'er the flow'ry vales below,
A whirlwind ſnatch'd her to the banks of Po.

Tow'rds Rome at length her baleful eye ſhe roll'd,
Rome, the world's dread, and Diſcord's fane of cld,
Imperial Rome, by deſtiny deſign'd,
In peace, in war, the miſtreſs of mankind.
By conqueſt firſt ſhe ſtretch'd her wide domain,
And all earth's monarchs wore her galling chain;
On arms alone her ſolid empire grew,
And the world crouch'd where'er her eagle flew.
More peaceful art her modern rule ſupports,
Now ev'n her conqu'rors tremble in her courts;
Deep rooted in their hearts her pow'r ſhe ſees,
And needs no thunder but her own decrees.

High on that gorgeous wreck of ancient war,
Where Mars for ages drove his rattling car,
A pontiff now maintains his prieſtly ſtate,
And fills the throne where once the Cæſars ſate.

There

There wand'ring heedleſs of the mighty dead,
Monaſtic feet on Cato's aſhes tread,
On God's own altar there the throne they raiſe,
And one deſpotic hand the cro's and ſceptre ſways.

There firſt his infant church th' almighty plac'd,
By turns with zeal rejected, or embrac'd;
There heav'ns high will his firſt apoſtle taught,
In native truth and ſingleneſs of thought.
Scarce meaner praiſe his ſucceſſors acquir'd,
And they were honour'd moſt, who leaſt aſpir'd;
No ſopp'ry then their modeſt brow adorn'd,
All praiſe but virtue, and all wealth they ſcorn'd,
And flew with rapture from their low abode,
To die triumphant in the cauſe of God.
Deprav'd at length they ſcorn'd their humble ſtate,
And heav'n, for man's offences, made them great;
Ambition then profan'd the ſacred ſhrine
And human pow'r was graſted on divine;
The lurking dagger and the pois'ning bowl,
Were the dark baſis of their new controul.
Vicegerents of the Lord, his holy place
With brutal luſt they bluſh'd not to diſgrace,

'Till

'Till Rome, oppreſs'd beneath their hateful reign,
Sigh'd for her idol gods and pagan rites again.
A wiſer race more modern times beheld,
Who crimes like theſe or wrought not, or conceal'd:
Then kings appeal'd to Rome's deciſive pow'r,
And choſe their umpire, whom they fear'd before;
Humility once more and meekneſs ſhone
Renew'd, beneath the proud pontific crown.
But pious fraud and prieſtcraft in theſe days,
Are Rome's chief virtue, and her worthieſt praiſe.

Now in the pomp of apoſtolic ſtate
Supreme, and crown'd with empire, Sixtus ſate;
If fraud and churliſh inſolence might claim
Renown, no monarch bore a fairer name.
Long time he ſculk'd beneath the driver's part
Diſguis'd, and owed his greatneſs to his art;
Long ſeem'd unworthy what he ſigh'd to gain,
And ſhun'd it long the ſurer to obtain.

Deep in his palace, ſecret and unſeen,
Dwelt dark-veil'd policy, myſterious queen;

Line. 215. Sixtus the fifth when he was cardinal of Montalto, counterfeited the ideot ſo artfully for 15 years, that he was commonly called the Aſs of Ancona. It is well known by what contrivances he obtained the papacy, and with what haughtineſs he governed.

Unſocial intereſt and ambition join'd
Of yore, to ſpawn this peſt of human kind.
Her ſmiles a free untroubled ſoul expreſs'd,
Tho' cares unnumber'd ſwarm'd within her breaſt;
Keen were her haggard eyes, nor knew to cloſe
Their wakeful lids, nor would admit repoſe;
Thick woven films o'er Europe's ſight ſhe ſpreads,
Confounds her counſels, and her kings miſleads;
Calls truth itſelf to teſtify a fraud,
And ſtamps impoſture with the ſeal of God.

When firſt the phantom Diſcord met her view,
With inſtant rapture to her arms ſhe flew;
Then ſmil'd a ghaſtly grin, but ſighing ſoon,
As one o'erwhelm'd with ſorrow, thus begun:
I ſee, alas! thoſe happy times no more,
When thoughtleſs multitudes ador'd my pow'r,
When Europe credulous obey'd my laws,
And mix'd with mine religion's ſacred cauſe.
I ſpoke, and kings from their exalted ſeat
Came trembling down, and worſhip'd at my feet;
High on the ecchoing vatican I ſtood,
And breath'd my wars, and launch'd my ſtorms abroad.

Ev'n

Ev'n life and death confeſs'd my proud domain,
And monarchs reign'd by me, or ceas'd to reign.
Now France ſubdues my light'nings e'er they fly,
And quench'd and ſmother'd, in my graſp, they die.
Religion's friend, ſhe thwarts my ſlighted arms,
And breaks my philtres, and diſpell's my charms;
Truth's borrow'd guiſe in vain did I diſplay,
She firſt diſcern'd, and tore the maſk away.
But oh! what joy could I delude her now,
At leaſt avenge my ſuff'rings on my foe.
Come then! my light'nings with thy torch reſtore,
And France ſhall feel us, and the world once more;
Our bonds again, earth's haughty lords ſhall wear,
Again—ſhe ſpoke, and pierced the yielding air.

Line 248. During the wars in the thirteenth century, between the emperors and the popes, Gregory IX. had the hardineſs not only to excommunicate the emperor Frederic II. but even to offer the imperial crown to Robert, the brother of St. Louis. The parliament of France aſſembled, anſwer'd in the name of the king, that the pope could not lawfully depoſe a ſovereign, nor the brother of a king of France receive from the hand of the pope, a crown over which neither he nor St. Peter had any right. In 1570 the ſitting parliament iſſued a famous arret againſt the bull in cæna domini.

The celebrated remonſtrances made by the parliament under Louis XI. on the ſubject of the pragmatic ſanction, are well known, as are thoſe likewiſe which they made to Henry III. againſt the ſcandalous bull of Sixtus the fifth, which called the reigning family, a generation of baſtards, &c. and the continual fortitude with which they always maintained our liberties againſt the pretenſions of the court of Rome.

Remote

Remote from Rome, where vanity and pride,
In temples ſacred to themſelves reſide,
Conceal'd from ſight, within her humble cell,
Religion, penſive maid, delights to dwell.
There angels hover round her calm abode,
And waft her raptures to the throne of God.
Mean while, the ſanction of her injur'd name
Th'oppreſſor's wrong, and tyrant's fury claim;
Yet doom'd to ſuffer, no revenge ſhe knows,
But melts in ſilent bleſſings on her foes.
Her artleſs charms their modeſt luſtre ſhroud
For ever from the vain tumultuous crowd,
Who without faith their impious vows prefer,
And pray to fortune, while they kneel to her.
In Henry ſhe beheld her future ſon,
And knew the fates had mark'd him for her own,
With ſighs to ſpeed the deſtin'd hour ſhe ſtrove,
And view'd and watch'd him with a ſeraph's love.

Sudden the * fiends their awful foe ſurprize;
The captive lifts to heav'n her ſtreaming eyes;
In vain—for heav'n to prove her virtue ſure
And ſtedfaſt faith, reſigns her to their pow'r.
Soon in her ſnowy veil and holy weeds
The monſters muffles their deteſted heads,

* Policy, and Diſcord.

Then

Then fir'd with hope, and glorying in their might,
Stretch ſwift to Paris their impetuous flight.

Deep in the Sorbonne, in auguſt debate,
The ſage expounders of heav'n's dictates ſate.
Their faith unſhaken, loyalty unfeign'd,
The judges and th'examples of the land;
Sway'd by no errour, by no fear controul'd,
Each bore an upright heart, was maſculine and bold.
Alas! what human virtue never errs——
Behold the tempter! policy appears;
Smooth was the melting flatt'ry of her tongue,
And on her artful lips perſuaſion hung.
The dazzling mitre and the ſweeping train,
With eaſe allure th'ambitious and the vain;
With ſecret bribes the miſer's voice ſhe buys,
With decent praiſe, the learned and the wiſe;
From each his virtue by ſome art ſhe ſtole,
And ſhook with ſounding threats the coward's ſoul.

Their counſels now with riot they diſgrace,
Truth heard the din alarm'd, and fled the place.
When thus a ſage the gen'ral voice expreſs'd,
" Kings are the creatures of the church confeſs'd;
" Chaſtized or pardon'd as her laws decree,
" That church, and guardians of thoſe laws, are we;

" Annull'd

" Annull'd and cancell'd are the vows we ſwore;
" Such is our will, and Valois reigns no more."
Scarce was the curſt decree pronounc'd aloud,
When ruthleſs Diſcord copied it in blood,
And ſign'd and ſworn the fatal record ſtood.

Then ſwift from church to church, with eager ſpeed
The fiend divulges their advent'rous deed;
Where'er ſhe came her ſaintly garb beſpoke
Eſteem, and ſage and holy was her look.
Forth from their gloomy cells, ſhe calls amain
The meagre ſlaves of voluntary pain;
Behold in me religion's ſelf, ſhe cries;
Aſſert my rights, and let your zeal ariſe,
'Tis I approach you, 'tis my voice you hear,
For proof, mark well the flaming ſword I bear,
Of temper'd light'ning is that edge divine,
And God's own hand intruſted it to mine.

Line 309. On the 17th of January 1589, the faculty of Theology in Paris awarded that famous decree, by which it was declared, that the ſubject was releaſed from his oath of allegiance, and might lawfully make war upon the king. Le Fevre, the Dean, and ſome of the wiſeſt refuſed to ſign it. Afterwards, when the Sorbonne were ſet at liberty, they revoked this decree, which the tyranny of the League had extorted from ſome of their ſociety. All the religious orders who, like the Sorbonne, had declared themſelves againſt the royal family, like them retracted. But would they have retracted, had the houſe of Lorrain ſucceeded?

Emerge,

Emerge, my children! from this ſilent gloom,
The time for action now and high exploit is come.
Go forth, and teach the lukewarm wav'ring crowd,
To ſlay their king if they would ſerve their God.
Think how the miniſtry by ſpecial grace
Was giv'n of old to Levi's holy race;
Jehova's ſelf pronounced that glory due
To their deſerts, when Iſrael's ſons they ſlew.
Where are, alas! thoſe times of triumph fled,
When by the brothers arm the victim bled?
Ye prieſts devout, your ſpirit was their guide,
'Twas by your hands alone Coligny died;
'Twas then the ſlaughter raged, go forth, explain
My voice abroad, and let it rage again.

She ſpoke, and wav'd the ſignal; ev'ry heart
Throbb'd with the poiſon of the beldam's art.
To Paris next their ſolemn march ſhe led,
High o'er the midſt the banner'd croſs was ſpread,

Line 342. When Henry III. and the king of Navarre appeared in arms before Paris, moſt of the monks put on armour and mounted guard with the citizens. This paſſage in the poem nevertheleſs alludes to the proceſſion of the League, in which 1200 armed monks were reviewed in Paris, having William Roſe, biſhop of Senlis at their head. The fact is mentioned here, though it did not happen 'till after the death of Henry III.

And

And hymns and holy ſongs they chaunted loud,
As heav'n itſelf their impious cauſe avow'd.
Ev'n on their knees their frenzy they declare,
And mix a pious curſe in ev'ry pray'r:
Bold in the pulpit, tim'rous in the field,
With uncouth arm the pond'rous ſword they wield,
Their penitential ſhirts the zealots hide
Beneath their canker'd armour's clumſy pride;
And thus th'inglorious band in foul array
Thro' tides of gazing rabble ſped their way,
While high in effigy pourtray'd they bore
Their God, the God of peace, their crazy troop before.

Mayne with the pomp of public praiſe adorn'd
Their wild attempt, which in his heart he ſcorn'd.
For well he knew fanatic rage would paſs
For ſound religion with the common claſs,
Nor wanted he the princely craft, to court
And ſooth the follies of the meaner ſort.
The ſoldier laugh'd, the ſage with frowns ſurvey'd
Their antick pageantry and mad parade,
"The many rend the ſkies with loud applauſe,"
And hail the rev'rend bulwarks of their cauſe.
Their daring raſhneſs firſt to fear gave way,
And frenzy now ſucceeds to their diſmay.

The

The ſpirit thus that rules th'obedient main,
Can lull the waves to reſt, or wake the ſtorm again.

Now diſcord from the tribe of Valois' foes,
Twice eight, the rankeſt of the faction choſe;
Slaves of the queen, who yet preſum'd to guide
The car of ſtate, like monarch's, at her ſide,
While pride and perfidy, revenge and death,
With ſtreams of ſlaughter mark'd the road beneath.
Mayne bluſh'd to ſee the paultry minions ſtand
So near himſelf, his equals in command,
But fellowſhip in guilt all rank deſtroys,
As great the wretch who ſerves, as who employs.
So when the winds fierce tyrants of the deep,
The Seine or Rhone with rapid fury ſweep,
Black riſes from below the ſtagnant mud,
And ſtains the ſilver ſurface of the flood.
So when the flames ſome deſtin'd town invade,
And on the plain the ſmoking tow'rs are ſpread,

Line 370. It is not meant that there were but ſixteen individuals liſted in the faction, as the Abbé le Gendre has remark'd in his little hiſtory of France; but they were called the Sixteen, from the ſixteen quarters of Paris which they governed by their ſpies and their emiſſaries.

Line 377. The Sixteen were long independent of the duke of Mayenne. One of them named Normand, ſaid once in the duke's chamber, they who had made him, could eaſily unmake him.

The

The mingling metals in one maſs are roll'd,
And worthleſs droſs incruſts the pureſt gold.

Themis alone uninfluenced by their crimes,
Eſcapes the foul contagion of the times;
With her, nor hope of pow'r nor fear prevail,
But ſtill well-poiſed ſhe trim'd the ſteady ſcale,
No ſpots the luſtre of her ſhrine impair,
But juſtice finds a ſacred refuge there.

There, foes to vice, and equity their guide,
An awful ſenate o'er the laws preſide,
With patriot candour watchful to ſecure
The people's privilege and monarch's pow'r,
True to the crown, yet anxious for the ſtate,
Tyrants alike and rebels are their hate;
Firm their allegiance ſtill, tho' free and brave
They ſcorn to ſink the ſubject to the ſlave,
Rome and the Roman pow'r, full well they know,
Know to reſpect it, and to curb it too.

Chos'n from the League, a furious troop beſet
The portal, and invade the ſtill retreat;
Buſſy, that whom no chief might better claim
That bad pre-eminence, their leader came,

And

And thus the ruffian, proud of the command
He bore, beſpoke the venerable band.

Ye, who for pay the laws vile drudg'ry bear,
And doze, and dream, plebeians as you are,
Of kings committed to your guardian care,
Yet ſtill when public feuds and broils prevail,
Set the mean trappings of your rank to ſale,
Tim'rous in war, in peace a bluſt'ring train,
Here what your lords, the commonwealth, ordain.
Societies were form'd e'er kings were made,
We claim the rights our anceſtors betray'd,
The people whom your arts enſlaved before,
Diſcern the cheat, and will be ſlaves no more.
Truce with the pomp of titles then, away
With ev'ry ſound of arbitrary ſway,
Draw from the people's rights your pow'r alone,
Friends of the ſtate, nor bondſmen of the throne.

Line 405. On the 16th of January 1589, Buſſy le Clerc, one of the Sixteen, who from a fencing maſter was become governor of the Baſtile, and chief of the faction, entered the grand chamber of the parliament, followed by fifty guards. He preſented to them a requeſt, or rather an order to compell them to renounce the royal family. On their refuſal he himſelf impriſoned in the Baſtile all thoſe who oppoſed his party. There he made them faſt upon bread and water, that they might be the readier to ranſom themſelves out of his cuſtody, for which reaſon he was called the Grand Penitentiary of the Parliament.

He

He ſpoke, and ſcorn appear'd in ev'ry eye,
Nor cenſure elſe vouchſafed they, or reply.
So when of old within her ruin'd wall
Rome in diſmay receiv'd the conqu'ring Gaul,
Undaunted ſtill her awful ſenate ſate,
Calm as in peace, nor trembled at their fate.

Tyrants he cried with fury, though not free
From ſecret dread, obey or follow me.
Then fam'd for worth and fearleſs of his foes,
Their honour'd chief, illuſtrious Harlay roſe,
And claim'd his fetters with ſo ſtern a tone,
As for their hands he ſought them, not his own.
At once his hoary brethren of the laws,
Ambitious victims in the royal cauſe,
And proud to ſhare their Harlay's glorious pains,
With outſtretch'd arms received the traitor's chains.
The gath'ring multitude around them roars,
And crowds attend them to thoſe † dreary tow'rs,
Where vengeance, undiſtinguiſhing in blood,
Too oft confounds the guilty and the good.

Thus ſinks the ſtate beneath their lawleſs pow'r,
The Sorbonne's fall'n, the ſenate is no more.

† The Baſtile.

But

But why this throng? that univerſal yell?
The fatal ſcaffold, and the tort'ring wheel?
Say for whoſe puniſhment this pomp deſign'd?
For theirs—the firſt, the nobleſt of mankind.
So fare the juſt in Paris, ſuch reward
For patriots here, and heroes is prepar'd.
Yet hapleſs ſuff'rers, no diſgrace invades
Your honeſt fame, nor bluſh your injur'd ſhades,
Your fate was glorious, and whoe'er like you
Dies for his king, ſhall die with glory too.

O'erjoy'd mean while, and revelling in blood,
Amidſt her bands triumphant diſcord ſtood,
Self-ſatisfied, with well-contented air,
She ſaw the dire effects of civil war,
Saw thouſand's leagued againſt their monarch's life,
Yet ev'n themſelves divided and at ſtrife,
Dupes of her pow'r, and ſervants of her hate,
Puſh the mad war, and urge their country's fate,
Tumult within, and danger all without,
While havock ſmote the realm, and march'd it round about.

Line 449. On Friday November 15, 1591. Barnaby Briſſon, a perſon of great knowledge, who executed the office of chief preſident in the abſence of Achilles de Harlay: Claude Larcher, counſellor of the Inqueſts, and Jean Tardif, counſellor of the Châtelet, were hanged in the little Châtelet by order of the Sixteen.

THE

HENRIADE.

CANTO the FIFTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

The beſieged are very ſharply preſs'd. Diſcord *perſuades* Clement *to go to* Paris, *and aſſaſſinate the king. He is conducted by* Fanaticiſm, *whom* Diſcord *calls for that purpoſe from the infernal regions. Sacrifice of the Leaguers to the ſpirits of darkneſs.* Henry III. *is aſſaſſinated. Sentiments of* Henry IV. *upon the occaſion. He is acknowledged king of* France *by the army.

THE HENRIADE.

CANTO the FIFTH.

NOW marching on, thoſe dread machines appear'd,
Which death attended, and the rebels fear'd.
A hundred mouths pour'd forth the rapid balls,
And iron tempeſts rattl'd on the walls.
Now was employ'd, and exercis'd in vain
The zeal of party, and the wiles of May'ne.
The guards of Paris, and the noiſy crowd,
The prating doctors inſolent, and loud,
Tried, but in vain, our hero to ſubdue,
Beneath whoſe feet victorious laurels grew.
By Rome, and Philip were the thunders hurl'd,
But Rome diffus'd no terrors through the world.
His native ſloth the old Iberian ſhew'd,
And all his ſuccours were too late beſtow'd.

Through C[illegible]'s realms the plund'ring troops enjoy'd
The ſpoils [illegible]ities which their arms deſtroy'd.
An eaſy conqueſt o'er oppreſt allies
Was firſt, and faireſt in the traitor's eyes.
The falling League but waited to receive
Whate'er the pride of tyranny could give,
When fate, that governs with ſupreme command,
Appear'd ſuſpended by a zealot's hand.

Forgive, ye citizens, whoſe peaceful days
Are calm, and bright'ned by ſerener rays,
Forgive the bard who paints the horrid crimes
That ſtain'd the annals of preceding times.
Yourſelves unſullied may the lays approve,
Whoſe hearts are warm with loyalty, and love.

In ev'ry age, ſome venerable ſeer
For heav'ns pure joys has ſhed the pious tear;
Some rigid anchorets with vows divine
Have heap'd their incenſe on religion's ſhrine:
Loſt to the world, to each idea loſt
That friendſhip loves, or charity can boaſt.
Their gloomy ſhades, and cloiſters ever rude
The beams of fair humanity exclude.

Others

Others in flowing periods have diſplay'd
Religion's truths by learning's pow'rful aid.
In theſe ambition has produc'd deſires
Mean, and unworthy virtue's ſacred fires.
Oft' have their ſchemes extended far, and wide,
And all their piety been ſunk in pride.
Thus by perverſe, untoward abuſes ſtill
The higheſt good becomes the greateſt ill.
Thoſe, who the life of Dominic embrac'd,
In Spain with wreaths of glory have been grac'd.
From mean employments have with luſtre ſhone,
Like painted inſects glitt'ring round the throne.
In France they flouriſh'd in the days of yore,
With equal zeal, but far unequal pow'r.
The kindly patronage, from kings deriv'd,
Might ſtill attend them, had not Clement liv'd.
The ſoul of Clement, gloomy, and auſtere,
Was form'd to virtues rigid, and ſevere.
Soon as the torrent of rebellion flow'd,
The tide he follow'd, and pronounc'd it good.
Fell Diſcord riſing had profuſely ſhed
Infernal poiſons o'er his youthful head.
The long-drawn iſle, and venerable ſhrine
Witneſs what pray'rs fatigued the pow'rs divine.

This was their form, before the throne of grace,
While duſt, and aſhes ſanctifi'd his face.

Almighty being, whoſe avenging arm
Protects religion, and her ſons from harm,
How long ſhall juſtice ſleep, or tyrants live,
The perjur'd flouriſh, and oppreſſion thrive?
Let us, O God, thy gracious mercies tell,
Thy fiery ſcourges let the ſinner feel.
Diſpel death's horrid gloom, aſſiſt the brave,
And cruſh the tyrant, whom thy fury gave.
Send thy deſtroying angel from above,
Deſcend in flames, and let thy thunders move.
Deſcend, and quell the ſacrilegious hoſt,
Defeat their triumphs, and confound their boaſt.
Let ruin ſeize, great ſov'reign lord of all,
Kings, chiefs, and armies in one common fall.
As gath'ring ſtorms the leaves of Autumn bear
O'er hills, and vallies through the fields of air.
The League ſhall praiſe thy name with holy tongue,
Whilſt blood, and murder elevate the ſong.

Diſcord, attentive, heard his hideous cries,
And ſwift to Pluto's dreary regions flies.

From

From thoſe dark realms the worſt of tyrants came,
Fanatic Dæmon is his horrid name.
Religion's ſon, but rebel in her cauſe,
He tears her boſom, and diſdains her laws.
'Twas him that guided Ammon's frantic race,
Where ſilver Arnon winds his liquid maze.
When weeping mothers, with mad zeal poſſeſt,
Slew their fond infants clinging to the breaſt.
Through him, raſh Jeptha vow'd, the fiend imbrued
The father's dagger in the daughter's blood.
By him the impious Chalchas was inſpir'd,
And tender Iphigenia's death requir'd.
Thy foreſts, France, the cruel pow'r approv'd;
There ſmoak'd the incenſe which Tentates lov'd.
Thy ſhades have ſeen the human victims bleed,
Whilſt hoary druids authoriz'd the deed.
From Rome's proud capitol he gave the word,
When chriſtians ſhudderd at the pagan ſword.
When Rome ſubmitted to the ſon of God,
High o'er the church he wav'd his iron rod.
Chriſtians, once doom'd to feel the tort'ring flame,
Were deaf to mercy, and unmov'd by ſhame.
On Thames's banks the ſeeds of faction grew,
Whoſe bloody arm the feeble monarch ſlew.

The

The ſame fierce genius fans the ſame diſdain
At Liſbon, or Madrid, when Jews expire
Unwilling to deſert the cauſe of heav'n,
Or quit the faith their anceſtors have giv'n.

Like ſome high prieſt, his part the demon play'd,
In the pure veſt of innocence array'd.
Now, from the wardrobe of eternal night
For other crimes equipp'd, he ſprung to light.
Deceit, for ever plauſible, and fair,
Dreſs'd him like Guiſe in perſon, height, and air.
The haughty Guiſe, whoſe artifice alone
Enchain'd the liſtleſs monarch on his throne,
Whoſe pow'r ſtill working, like ſome fatal ſtar,
Foreboded ruin, and inſpir'd to war.
The dreaded helmet glitter'd on his head;
The ſword, prepar'd for ev'ry murd'rous deed,
Flam'd in his hand;—and many a wound could tell
How once at Blois the factious hero fell.
For vengeance calling loud, the crimſon tide
Faſt flow'd in copious ſtreams adown his ſide.
Clad in this mournful garb, when night had ſhed
Her peaceful ſlumbers over Clement's head,
In that ſtill hour, when horrid ſpectres meet,
He ſought the zealot in his calm retreat.

cabal,

Cabal, and ſuperſtition, nurſe of ſin,
Unbarr'd the doors, and let the chieftain in.

Thy pray'rs, he cried the pow'rs of heav'n receive,
But more than tears, or pray'rs ſhould Clement give.
The Leaguer's god will other off'rings claim;
More fit, more worthy of his holy name.
Far other incenſe muſt adorn his ſhrine;
Off'rings more pure, and worſhip more divine.
Had Judith only wept with plaintive ſighs,
A female's grief, and unavailing cries,
Had life been dearer than her country's call,
Judith had ſeen Bethulia's levell'd wall.
Theſe exploits copy, theſe oblations bring,
Derive thy currents from that ſacred ſpring.
I ſee thee bluſh;—go, fly at my command,
Let royal blood now conſecrate thy hand.
Set wretched Paris from her tyrant free,
Revenging Rome, the univerſe, and me.
Go, murder Valois, as he murder'd Guiſe,
Nor deem it faulty in religion's eyes.
Who guards the church, and vindicates her laws,
Is bravely acting in fair virtue's cauſe.
When heav'n commands, then ev'ry deed is good,
Attend her accents, and prepare for blood.

When

Thrice happy, could'st thou join the tyrant's death
To Bourbon's fall, and gain a nobler wreath!
Oh could thy citizens! — but fate denies
Thy hand the honors of that happy prize!
Yet, should thy fame with rays inferior shine,
Scorn not the gift, but finish heaven's design!

Thus spoke the phantom, and unsheath'd the blade,
By hatred once in Stygian waters laid.
To Clement's hand he gave the fatal steel,
Then swiftly fled, and downward sunk to hell.
The young recluse, too easily deceiv'd,
Himself th' almighty's delegate believ'd:
Embrac'd the gift with reverential love,
And begg'd assistance from the pow'rs above.
The fiend no superstitious influence spar'd,
But all his soul for parricide prepar'd.
How apt is error to mislead mankind!
And reason's piercing eye how often blind!
The raging Clement, happy, and at ease,
Happy as those whom truth and virtue please;
With down-cast looks, and virtue's clouded brow,
To heav'n address'd the sacrilegious vow.
On as he march'd, his penitential veil
Conceal'd from view the parricidal steel.

The faireſt flow'rs each conſcious friend beſtow'd,
And balmy odors to perfume the road.
Theſe guides, in counſel, or in praiſes join'd
To add new fervor to his zealous mind.
The holy calendar receiv'd his name,
Equal to ſaints in virtue, and in fame.
Now hail'd as patron, now ador'd as God,
And fed with incenſe by the kneeling crow'd.
Tranſports leſs warm, leſs moving raptures fir'd
The chriſtian heroes, and their ſouls inſpir'd,
When pious brethren were conſign'd to death,
Firm, and intrepid to their lateſt breath.
They kiſſed each footſtep, thought each torture gain,
And wiſh'd to feel the agonizing pain.
Fanatics thus religion's enſigns bear,
Like worthies triumph, and like ſaints appear.
The ſame deſire the good, and impious draws,
Unnumber'd martyrs fall in error's cauſe.

Mayne's piercing eyes beheld the future blow,
And more was known, than what he ſeem'd to know.
Intending wiſely, when the blood was ſpilt,
To reap the profits, but avoid the guilt.
Sedition's ſons were left to guide the whole,
And ſteel with rage the impious zealot's ſoul.

To Paris' gates they lead the traitor on;
Whilſt the Sixteen with fond impatience run
To arts infernal, and devoutly pray
That heav'n her ſecret counſels would diſplay.
This ſcience once diſtinguiſh'd Cath'rine's reign,
Tho' always criminal, and often vain.
The ſervile people, that for ever love
Each courtly vice, and what the great approve,
Fond of whate'er is marvellous, or new,
The ſame impieties with zeal purſue.

When night's ſtill ſhades conceal'd the bands impure,
Silence conducts them to a vault obſcure.
By the pale torch, which faintly pierc'd the gloom,
They raiſe an altar on the mould'ring tomb.
There both the royal images appear,
Alike the objects of their rage, and fear.
There to almighty pow'r their vows are paid,
And helliſh dæmons ſummon'd to their aid.
High on the walls, a hundred lances ſtood,
Myſterious, awful terrors! plung'd in blood.
Their prieſt was one of that unhappy race
Proſcrib'd on earth, and ſentenc'd to diſgrace.

Slaves

Slaves long inrur'd to ſuperſtition's lore,
Whoſe crimes, and ſorrows ſpread from ſhore to ſhore.
The Leaguers next the ſacrifice begin
With horrid cries, and bacchanalian din:
Now bathe their arms within the crimſon tide;
Now on the altar ſtrike at Valois' ſide.
Now with more rage, the terror to compleat,
See Henry's image trod beneath their feet.
Death, as they thought, would aid the impious blow,
And ſend the heroes to the ſhades below.

The Hebrew tried by blaſphemy to move
The depths beneath, and all the pow'rs above.
Invok'd the ſpirits that in æther dwell,
Swift light'nings, thunders, and the flames of hell.
Endor's fam'd prieſteſs erſt ſuch off'rings made,
And rais'd by dire inchantments Samuel's ſhade'
Thus in Samaria once 'gainſt Judah hung
The lying accent on the prophet's tongue.
And thus inflexibly Ateius roſe
The high deſigns of Craſſus to oppoſe.

The Leagues mad ruler waited to receive
To charms, and ſpells what anſwer heav'n would give.
Convinc'd that vows, thus offer'd, wing their way
To the pure regions of eternal day.

Heav'n

Heav'n heard the magic founds, which only drew
From thence the vengeance to their crimes due.
For them were ſtopt the laws which nature gave,
And plaintive murmurs fill'd the ſilent cave.
Succeſſive light'nings in the depth of night
Flaſh'd all around, and gleam'd with horrid light.
Great Henry ſhone amidſt the lambent flames,
Encircl'd round with glory's golden beams.
High on the car of triumph as he rode,
Grace on his brow the laurel wreath beſtow'd,
The royal ſceptre glitter'd in his hand,
Emblem of pow'r, and enſign of command.
Loud rolling thunders gave the fatal ſign,
And op'ning earth receiv'd the flaming ſhrine.
The prieſt, and Leaguers ſhudder'd at the ſight,
And veil'd their crimes beneath the ſhades of night.
The rolling thunders, and the fiery blaze
Declar'd that God had number'd Valois' days.
Grim death rejoic'd; and, ſuch th' almighty's will,
Crimes were allow'd his ſentence to fulfil.

Now Clement to the royal tent drew near.
And begg'd admiſſion undiſmay'd by fear.
For heav'n, he ſaid, had ſent him to beſtow
Reviving honors on the monarch's brow;

And

And ſecrets to unfold, which might appear
Worthy reception from his ſovereign's ear.
All mark his looks, and many a queſtion aſk
Leaſt his attire ſome bad deſign ſhould maſk.
He undiſturb'd, with calm, and ſimple air
Returns them anſwers plauſible, and fair.
Each accent ſeems from innocence to ſpring.
The guards attend, and lead him to their king.

Calm as before, he bent the ſuppliant knee;
Unruffl'd, and unaw'd by majeſty:
Mark'd where to ſtrike, and thus, by falſehood's aid,
With treach'rous lies his feign'd addreſſes paid.

Pardon, dread ſovereign, him who trembling brings
Submiſſive praiſes to the king of kings.
Oh let me thank kind heav'n, whoſe gracious aid
Has ſhow'r'd down bleſſings on thy ſacred head.
Potier the good, and Villeroi the ſage
Have faithful prov'd in this rebellious age.
Harlay the great, whoſe brave, intrepid zeal
Was ever active in the public weal,
Immur'd in priſon, ſtill thy cauſe defends,
Confounds the League, and animates thy friends.

That

That r[illegible]nty being, whoſe all-piercing eyes
Defeat th[illegible]ounſels of the great, and wiſe:
Whoſe [illegible]no human knowledge can withſtand,
Whoſe works are finiſh'd by the weakeſt hand:
To Harla[illegible]uided thy devoted ſlave,
That loya[illegible]bject ever good, and brave.
His ſage advice, and ſentiments refin'd
Diffus'd a radiance o'er [illegible]cl[illegible]ded mind.
To bring theſe lines [illegible]eagerneſs I flew,
By Harlay counſell'd, and [illegible]alois true.

The king receiv'd the letter with ſurprize,
And tears of holy rapture fill'd his eyes.
Oh when, he cried, ſhall Valois' hand ſupply
Rewards proportion'd to thy loyalty?
Thus ſpoke the monarch with affection warm,
Love undiſſembl'd, and extended arm.
Each motion well the monſtrous traitor eyed,
And fiercely plung'd the dagger in his ſide.
Soon as they ſaw the crimſon torrents flow,
A thouſand hands reveng'd the fatal blow.
The zealot wiſh'd not for a happier time,
But ſtood unmov'd, and triumph'd in his crime.
Through op'ning ſkies he ſaw the heav'nly-dome,
And endleſs glories in the world to come.

Claim'd

Claim'd the bright wreath of martyrdom from God,
And falling, bleſs'd the hand that ſhed his blood.
Oh dread illuſion terrible, and blind,
Worthy the hate, and pity of mankind.
Infectious preachers more deſerv'd the blame,
From whom the madneſs, and the poiſon came.

The hour arriv'd when Valois' darken'd ſight
Faintly beheld the parting, glimm'ring light.
Surrounding ſlaves with many a falling tear
Expreſs'd their griefs diſſembl'd, or ſincere.
For ſome there were, whoſe ſorrows ſoon expir'd,
With pleaſing hopes of future greatneſs fir'd.
Others, whoſe ſafety with the king was fled,
Themſelves lamented, not the royal dead.
Amidſt the various ſounds of plaintive cries
Tears unaffected flow'd from Henry's eyes.
Thy foe, great Bourbon, fell; but ſouls like thine
In ſuch dread moments ev'ry thought reſign,
Save thoſe which friendſhip, and compaſſion claim:
Self-love deſtroys not the cæleſtial flame.
The gen'rous chief forgot his own renown,
Tho' to himſelf devolv'd the regal crown.
To raiſe his eyes the dying monarch ſtrove,
And claſp'd his hand with tenderneſs, and love.

Bourbon, he cried, thy gen'rous tears refrain,
Let others weep whose conduct I disdain.
Fly thou to vengeance, spread the dire alarm,
Go reign, and triumph with victorious arms.
I leave thee struggling on the stormy coast
Where shipwreck'd Valois was for ever lost.
My throne awaits thee, take it as thy due,
Its sole protection was deriv'd from you.
Eternal thunders threaten Gallia's kings,
Then fear the pow'r from whom the glory springs.
By thee, from impious tenets undeceiv'd,
Be all the honours of his shrine reviv'd.
Farewell, brave prince, and reign by all ador'd,
Guarded by heav'n from each assassin's sword.
You know the League, with us begins the blow,
Nor stays it's fury, but would end with you.
In future days perchance some barb'rous hand,
Obedient slave to faction's dread command,
Some arm——but oh! ye Guardian angels, spare
Virtues so pure, so exquisite, and rare.
Permit——no more he said; departing breath
Consign'd the monarch to the arms of death.

Now was all Paris fill'd with joyful cries,
And odious songs of triumph rent the skies.

The

The fanes are open'd wide at Valois' death,
And ev'ry Leaguer wears the flow'ry wreath.
All labour ends whilſt faction blith, and gay,
To mirth, and feaſting conſecrates the day.
Bourbon appear'd the object of their ſport,
And glorious valour ſeem'd his ſole ſupport.
Say, could he riſe, and e'er reſiſt again
The ſtrengthen'd League, the angry church, and Spain:
The Roman thunders with ſuch fury hurl'd,
And the bright treaſures of the weſtern world!

Some warlike few, who little underſtood
What moſt contributes to the public good,
Affecting ſcruples fooliſh, and refin'd,
Calvin's defence already had reſign'd.
Redoubl'd ardour in the royal cauſe
The reſt inflam'd, and rul'd by other laws.
Theſe gen'rous ſoldiers, well approv'd in war,
Who long had rode on triumph's radiant car,
To Bourbon give unſettl'd Gallia's throne,
And all proclaim him worthy of the crown.
Thoſe valiant knights, the Givris, and Daumonts,
The Montmorencis, Sancis, and Crillons,

Sweat

Swear to remain inviolable friends,
And guard his perſon to earth's utmoſt ends.
True to their laws, and faithful to their God,
They boldly march where honour points the road.

From you, my friends, cried Bourbon is deriv'd
That lot which kindred heroes have receiv'd.
No peers have authorized our high command,
No holy oil, or conſecrating hand.
All due allegiance, in the days of yore,
Your brave forefathers on their buckler ſwore.
To vict'rys laurell'd field your hands confin'd
From thence ſend forth the monarchs of mankind.
Thus ſpoke the chief, and, marching firſt, prepar'd
By martial deeds to merit his reward.

THE

THE

HENRIADE.

CANTO the SIXTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

After the death of Henry III. *the Leaguers aſſemble in* Paris *to elect a king. In the midſt of their debates,* Henry IV. *ſtorms the city. The aſſembly is diſmiſſed. The members that compoſed it repair to the ramparts. Deſcription of the enſuing battle.*

THE

HENRIADE

CANTO the SIXTH.

IN France an ancient cuſtom we retain,
When death's rude ſtroke has cloſed the monarch reign,
When deſtiny cuts ſhort the ſmooth deſcent,
And all the royal pedigree is ſpent,
The people to their former rights reſtor'd,
May change the laws or chuſe their future lord.
The ſtates in council repreſent the whole,
Elect the king, and limit his controul;
Thus our renown'd forefathers did ordain
That Capet ſhould ſucceed to Charlemagne.

The League with vain preſumption arrogates
This right, and haſtens to convene the ſtates.

They thought the murder of the king beſtow'd
That pow'r perhaps, on thoſe who ſhed his blood,
Thought that the ſemblance of a throne would ſhroud
Their dark deſigns, and captivate the croud,
Would help their jarring counſels to unite,
And give their foul pretence an air of right;
That from what ſource ſoe'er his claim may ſpring,
Juſt or unjuſt, a king is ſtill a king,
And worthy or unworthy of the ſway,
A Frenchman muſt have ſomething to obey.

Swift to the Louvre with imperious air
And fierce demeanour the proud chiefs repair;
Thither whom Spain embaſſador had ſent,
And Rome, with many a prieſtly bigot went,
To ſpeed th' election with tumultuous haſte,
An inſult on the kings of ages paſt,
And in the ſplendor of their trains, expence
Was ſeen, the child of public indigence.
No princely potentate or high-born peer
Sprung from our old nobility, was there,
Their grandeur now a ſhadowy form alone,
Though lawgivers by birth and kinſmen of the throne.

No

No ſage aſſertors of the public claim
Strenuous and hardy, from the commons came,
No lilies as of old the court array'd,
But foreign pomp and pageant in their ſtead.
There ſumptuous o'er the throne for May'ne prepar'd,
A canopy of royal ſtate was rear'd,
And on the front with rich embroid'ry graced,
Oh dire indignity! theſe lines were traced.
" Kings of the earth, and judges of mankind,
" Who deaf to mercy, by no laws confind,
" Lay nature waſte beneath your fierce domain,
" Let Valois' fate inſtruct you how to reign."

Forthwith contentious rage with jarring ſound,
And clam'rous ſtrife diſcordant eccho round.
Slave to the ſmiles of Rome, obſequious here
A venal flatt'rer ſoothes the legates ear;
'Tis time, he cries, the lily ſhould bow down
Her head, obedient to the triple crown,
Time that the church ſhould lift her chaſt'ning hand,
And from her high tribunal ſcourge the land.

Line. 54. The dukes of Guiſe wanted to eſtabliſh the inquiſition in France.

Cruel tribunal! ſcene of monkiſh pow'r,
Which ev'n the realms that ſuffer it, abhor;
Whoſe fiery prieſts by bigotry prepar'd,
Torture and death without remorſe award,
Diſgraceful to the ſacred cauſe they guard.
As if mankind were, as of old, poſſeſs'd
With pagan blindneſs, when the lying prieſt
T'appeaſe the wrath of heav'n with vengeance fir'd,
The ſacrifice of human blood requir'd.

Some for Iberian gold betray the ſtate,
And ſell it to the Spaniard whom they hate.
But mightier than the reſt, their pow'r was ſhewn,
Who deſtin'd May'ne already to the throne.
The ſplendour of a crown was wanting yet,
To make the fullneſs of his fame complete;
To that bright goal his daring wiſh he ſends,
Nor heeds the danger that on kings attends.

Then Potier roſe; plain, nervous and untaught
His eloquence, the language of his thought.
No blemiſh of the times had touch'd the ſage,
Rever'd for virtue in a vicious age;
Oft had he check'd, with courage uncontroul'd,
The tide of faction headlong as it roll'd,

Aſſerte

Aſſerted hardily the laws he loved,
Nor ever fear'd reproof, or was reprov'd.
He raiſed his voice; ſtruck ſilent at the ſound
The croud was huſh'd, and liſt'ning gather'd round.
So when at ſea the winds have ceas'd to roar,
And the loud ſailor's cries are heard no more,
No ſound ſurvives, but of the daſhing prow
That cleaves with proſp'rous courſe th' obedient wave below.
Such Potier ſeem'd; no rude diſturbance broke
Th' attentive calm, while freely thus he ſpoke.

" May'ne, I perceive then, has the gen'ral voice,
" And though I praiſe not, can excuſe your choice;
" His virtues I eſteem not leſs than you,
" And were I free to chuſe, might chuſe him too.
" But if the laws ambitious he pervert,
" His claim of empire cancels his deſert."

Thus far the ſage; when lo! that inſtant May'ne
Himſelf appear'd, with all a monarch's train.

" Prince! he purſued, and ſpoke it boldly forth,
" I dare oppoſe you, for I know your worth;

" Dare ſtep between your merit and the throne,
" Warm in the cauſe of France, and in our own.
" Vain your election were, your right unſound,
" While yet in France a Bourbon may be found;
" Heav'n in its wiſdom placed you near the throne,
" That you might guard but not uſurp the crown;
" His aſhes ſprinkled with a monarch's gore
" The ſhade of injured Guiſe can aſk no more;
" Point not your vengeance then at Henry's head,
" Nor charge him with the blood he never ſhed.
" Heav'ns influence on you both too largely flows,
" And 'tis your rival virtue makes you foes.
" But hark! the clamour of the common herd
" Aſcends the ſkies, and heretick's the word;
" And ſee the prieſthood ranged in dark array,
" To deeds of blood inſatiate urge their way!
" Barbarians bold — what cuſtom yet unknown,
" What law, or rather frenzy of your own,
" Can cancel your allegiance to the throne.
" Comes he, this Henry, ſavage and unjuſt,
" To'erthrow your ſhrines, and mix them with the duſt?
" He, to thoſe ſhrines in ſearch of truth he flies,
" And loves the ſacred laws yourſelves deſpiſe;

" Virtue

" Virtue alone, whatever form ſhe wears,
" Whatever ſect ſhe graces he reveres;
" Nor like yourſelves, weak, arrogant and blind,
" Dares do the work of God, and judge mankind;
" More righteous, and more chriſtian far than you,
" He comes to rule, but to forgive you too.
" And ſhall you judge your maſter, and ſhall he,
" The friend of freedom, not himſelf be free?
" Not ſuch, alas! nor ſullied with your crimes,
" Were the true chriſtian race of elder times;
" They tho' all heathen errors they abhorred,
" Serv'd without murmuring their heathen lord,
" The doom of death without a groan obey'd,
" And bleſs'd the cruel hand by which they bled:
" Such are the chriſtians whom true faith aſſures,
" They died to ſerve their kings, you murder yours,
" And God, whom you deſcribe for ever prone
" To wrath, if he delights to ſhow'r it down
" On guilty heads, ſhall aim it at your own,

He cloſed his bold harrangue, confuſion ſcar'd
Their conſcious ſouls, none anſwer'd him, or dar'd;
In vain they would have ſhaken from their hearts,
The dread which truth to guiltineſs imparts,

With

With fear and rage their troubled thoughts were toſs'd,
When ſudden a loud ſhout from all their hoſt
Was heard, to arms, to arms or we are loſt.

Dark clouds of duſt in floating volumes riſe
Wide o'er the champian, and obſcure the ſkies;
The clarion and the drum with horrid ſound,
Dread harbingers of ſlaughter eccho round.
So from his gloomy chambers in the north,
When the fierce ſpirit of the ſtorm breaks forth,
His duſky pinions ſhroud the noon-day light,
And thunder and ſharp winds attend his dreary flight.

'Twas Henry's hoſt came ſhouting from afar,
Diſdaining eaſe, and eager for the war;
O'er the wide plain they ſtretch'd their bright array,
And to the ramparts urged their furious way.

Theſe hours the chief vouchſaf'd not to conſume
In empty rites perform'd at Valois' tomb,
Unprofitable tribute! fondly paid,
By the proud living to th' unconſcious dead;
No lofty dome, or monumental pile,
On the waſte ſhore he rais'd with fruitleſs toil,

Vain

Vain arts! to reſcue the departed great,
From the rough tooth of time and rage of fate;
A nobler meed on Valois' ſhade below,
And worthier gifts he haſten'd to beſtow,
T' avenge his murder, make rebellion ceaſe,
And rule the ſubjugated land in peace.

The din of battle gath'ring at their gates,
Diſſolv'd their council, and diſpers'd the ſtates.
Swift from the walls to view th' advancing hoſt
The gen'ral flew, the ſoldier to his poſt,
With ſhouts th' approaching hero they incenſe,
And all is ripe for onſet and defence.

Tho' pleaſure now, and peace ſecurely reign
In all her courts, not ſuch was Paris then,
But girt with maſſy walls, and unexpos'd,
An hundred forts the narrower town inclos'd;
The ſuburbs now defenceleſs and unbarr'd,
The gentle hand of peace their only guard,
Adorn'd with all the pomp that wealth ſupplies,
Proud ſpires and palaces that pierce the ſkies,
Were then a cluſter of rude huts alone,
A rampart all around of earth was thrown,
With a deep foſs to part them from the town.

From

From th'eaſt the mighty chief his march began,
And death with haſty ſtrides came foremoſt in his van.
Wing'd with red flames impetuous from on high
And from below, the ſhow'ry bullets fly,
The rattling ſtorm reſiſtleſs thickens round,
And tumbles tow'r and baſtion to the ground;
Gor'd and defaced the gay battalions bleed,
And on the plain their ſhatter'd limbs are ſpread.

In earlier times, unaided and untaught,
His fate by ſimpler means the ſoldier wrought;
Strengh againſt ſtrength oppos'd the conteſt tried,
And on their ſwords alone the combatants relied;
More cruel wars their children learn'd to wage,
Nor leſs than light'ning ſatisfied their rage.
Then firſt was heard the thunder-bearing bomb,
Impriſon'd miſchief ſtruggling in it's womb,
Swift on the deſtin'd mark the pond'rous ſhell
Came down, and ſpread deſtruction where it fell.

Next, dire improvement on the barb'rous trade,
In hollow vaults the ſecret mine was laid;
In vain the warrior truſting in his might,
Speeds his bold march, and ſeeks the promis'd fight,

A ſudden blaſt divides the yawning earth,
And the black vapour kindles into birth,
Smote by ſtrange thunder ſinks th'aſtoniſh'd hoſt,
Deep in the dark abyſs for ever loſt.
Theſe dangers Bourbon unappall'd defies,
Impatient for the ſtrife, a throne the prize.
Where'er his hardy bands the hero leads,
'Tis hell beneath, and tempeſt o'er their heads,
His glorious ſteps undunated they purſue,
Fir'd by his deeds ſtill bright'ning in their view.

Grave in the midſt the valiant Mornay went,
Though ſlow his march, intrepid his intent;
Rage he alike diſdain'd, and ſlaviſh dread,
Nor heard the thunders burſting round his head;
War was heav'ns ſcourge on man, he wiſely thought,
Nor lov'd the taſk, but took it as his lot;
Ev'n for the wonders of his ſword he griev'd,
And loath'd it for the glories it atchiev'd.

Now pour'd their legions down the dreadful way,
Where ſmear'd with blood the ſloping Glacis lay;
More fierce as more in danger, with the ſlain
They choke the foſs, and lift it to the plain,

Then

Then born upon the ſupple numbers, reach
The ramparts, and ruſh headlong to the breach.
Waving his bloody fauchion, Henry led
The way, and enter'd furious at their head.
Already fixt by his victorious hand
High on the walls his glitt'ring banners ſtand:
Awe-ſtruck the Leaguers ſeem'd, as they implor'd
The conqu'ror's mercy, and confeſs'd their lord;
But May'ne recalls them to their guilty part,
And drives the dawning grace from ev'ry heart,
'Till crowded in cloſe Phalanx, they beſet
Their king, whoſe eye their hardieſt fear'd to meet.
Fierce on the battlements, and bathed in blood
Of thouſands ſlain, the fury Diſcord ſtood;
There beſt her horrid mandates they obey,
And join'd in cloſer fight more ſurely ſlay.

Sudden the deep-mouth'd engines ceaſe to roar,
And the loud thunder of the war is o'er:
At once an univerſal ſilence round,
With awful pauſe, ſucceeds the deaf'ning ſound;
Now thro' his foes the ſoldier cleaves his way,
And on the ſword alone depends the day;
Alternate the contending leaders boaſt
The bloody ramparts won, and yield them loſt:

Still

Still victory the doubtful balance ſway'd,
And join'd in air the mingling banners play'd,
'Till oft triumphant, and as oft ſubdued,
Fled the pale League, and Henry ſwift purſued.
'Tis thus the reſtleſs billows waſh the ſhore,
By turns o'erwhelm it, and by turns reſtore.

Then moſt in that tremendous hour was ſhewn,
The might of Bourbon's rival, and his own;
'Twas then each hero's warlike ſoul was prov'd,
That in the ſhock of charging hoſts unmov'd,
Amidſt confuſion, horror and deſpair,
Ranged the dread ſcene and ruled the doubtful war.

Mean while renown'd for many a martial deed,
A gallant Engliſh band brave Eſſex led,
In Gallia's cauſe with wonder they advance,
And ſcarcely can believe they fight for France.
On the ſame ramparts where the conquer'd Seine,
Saw in old time their great forefathers reign,
For England's ſake they wage the mortal ſtrife,
Proud to enhance her fame, and prodigal of life.
Impetuous Eſſex firſt the breach aſcends,
Where fierce D'Aumale the crowded paſs defends,

To

To fight [illegible]e fabled demi-gods they came,
Their age, their ardour, and their force the ſame;
French, [illegible]gliſh, Lorroneſe in combat cloſe,
And in one ſtream the mingled ſlaughter flows.

Oh th[illegible]! the genius of that fatal day,
Soul of the ſtrife, deſtroying angel, ſay,
W[illegible] which hero's hoſt
Yourſe[illegible] vour'd moſt.
Long[illegible] glory crown'd,
Dealt [illegible] legions round;
At length, b[illegible] vain aſſail'd,
The right [illegible]ſe [illegible]'s arms prevail'd;
Worn with diſaſtrous toil and long fatigue,
Exhauſted, hopeleſs, fled the vanquiſh'd League.
As on Pyrene's ever-clouded brow,
When ſwelling torrents threat the vale below,
A while with ſolid banks and lofty mounds,
They ſtay the foaming deluge in it's bounds;
But ſoon, the barrier broke, the ruſhing tide
Roars unreſiſted down the mountain's ſide,
Unroots the foreſt oaks, and bears away,
Flocks, folds and herds, an undiſtinguiſh'd prey:
So from the ſmoaking walls with matchleſs force,
Victorious Bourbon urged his rapid courſe,

Such

Such havock where the royal warrior paſs'd,
Deform'd the ranks and lay'd the battle waſte.
At length the friendly gates, by May'ne's command
Flung wide, receiv'd the deſolated band.
The victor hoſt around the ſuburbs fly
Incenſed, and hurl the blazing torch on high,
Their temp'rate valour kindles into rage,
And ſpoil and plunder are the war they wage.
Henry perceiv'd it not; with eager flight
He chaced the foe, diſpers'd before his ſight;
Spurr'd by his courage, with ſucceſs elate
And ardent joy, he reach'd the hoſtile gate,
Thence on his ſcatter'd pow'r aloud he calls,
"Haſte, fly my friends, and ſcale the haughty walls."

When ſudden in a rolling cloud enſhin'd,
A beauteous form came floating on the wind,
With gracious mien and awful to the view,
Tow'rds Henry the deſcending viſion flew,
His brow was with immortal ſplendor grac'd,
And horror mixt with love his radiant eyes expreſs'd.
Hold hapleſs conqu'ror of your native land!
The phantom cried, and ſtay your vengeful hand;

This.

This fair dominion you with war deface,
Is yours of old, the birthright of your race;
Theſe lives you ſeek, are vaſſals of your throne,
This wealth you give to plunder, is your own;
Spare your own heritage, nor ſeek to reign
A ſolitary monarch o'er the ſlain.
Amaz'd the ſoldier heard the ſolemn ſound,
And dropp'd his ſpoils, and proſtrate kiſs'd the gro
Then Henry, rage ſtill boiling in his breaſt,
Like ſeas hoarſe—murm'ring while they ſink to
Say bright inhabitant of heav'n, what means
Your hallow'd form amidſt theſe horrid ſcenes?
Mild as the breeze, at ſummers ev'ning tide
Serene, the viſionary ſhape replied.
Behold the ſainted king whom France adores,
Protector of the Bourbon race, and yours,
That Louis, who like you once urged the fight,
Whoſe ſhrines you heed not, and whoſe faith
ſlight;
Know when the deſtin'd days their courſe have
Heav'n ſhall itſelf conduct you to the throne;
Thine is the vict'ry, but that great reward,
Is for thy mercy, not thy might, prepar'd.

He ſpoke, the liſt'ning chief with rapture hears,
And down his cheek faſt flow the joyful tears;
Peace ſooth'd his tranquil heart, he dropp'd his ſword,
And on his knees devout the ſhade ador'd.
Then twice around his neck his arms he flung,
And thrice deceiv'd on vain embraces hung;
Light as an empty dream at break of day,
Or as a blaſt of wind, he ruſh'd away.

Mean while in haſte to guard th'inveſted town,
The ſwarming multitude the ramparts crown,
Thick from above a fiery flood they pour,
And at the monarch aim the fatal ſhow'r,
But heav'n's bright influence, round his temples ſhed,
Diverts the ſtorm, and guards his ſacred head.
'Twas then he ſaw, protected as he ſtood,
What thanks to his paternal ſaint he ow'd;
Tow'rds Paris his ſad eye in ſorrow thrown,
Ye French! he cried, and thou ill-fated town,
Ye citizens, a blind deluded herd,
How long will you withſtand your lawful lord!
Nor more; but as the ſtar that brings the day,
At eve declining in his weſtern way,
More mildly ſhoots his horizontal fires,
And ſeems an ampler globe as he retires,

Such

Such from the walls the parting hero turn'd,
While all his kindred ſaint within his boſom burn'd.
Vincennes he ſought, where Louis whilom ſpoke
His righteous laws beneath an aged oak.
Vincennes, alas! no more a calm retreat,
How art thou chang'd, thou once delightful ſeat!
Thy rural charms, thy peaceful ſmiles are fled,
And blank deſpair poſſeſſes thee inſtead.
'Tis there the great, their hapleſs labours done,
And all the ſhort-liv'd race of glory run,
The fickle changes of their various lot
Conclude, and die neglected and forgot.

Now night o'er heav'n purſued her duſty way,
And hid in ſhades the horrours of the day.

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378. It is well known how many illuſtrious priſoners the cardinals Richlieu and Mazarin confin'd at Vincennes.

THE

THE

HENRIADE.

CANTO the SEVENTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

Henry IV. *is tranſported in a viſion by* St. Louis *to heaven, and the infernal regions. He arrives at the palace of the Deſtinies; where he has an opportunity of ſeeing his poſterity, and the great men hereafter to be produc'd in* France.

THE

HENRIADE.

CANTO the SEVENTH.

THE great, the boundleſs clemency of God,
To ſooth the ills of life's perplexing road,
Sweet ſleep, and hope, two friendly beings gave,
Which earth's dark, gloomy confines never leave.
When man, fatigued by labours of the day,
Has toiled his ſpirits, and his ſtrength away,
That, nature's friend, reſtores her pow'rs again,
And brings the bleſt forgetfulneſs of pain.
This, oft deceitful, but for ever kind,
Diffuſes warmth and tranſport through the mind.
From her the few, whom heaven approves, may learn
The pleaſing iſſue of each high concern.
Pure as her author in the realms above
To them ſhe brings the tidings of his love.

Immortal Louis bid the faithful pair
Expand their downy wings, and ſoften Henry's care.

Still ſleep repairs to Vincenne's ſhady ground;
The winds ſubſide, and ſilence reigns around.
Hope's blooming offspring, happy dreams ſucceed,
And give the pleaſing, though ideal meed.
The verdant olive, and the laurel bough,
Entwined with poppies, grace the hero's brow.

On Bourbon's temples Louis plac'd the crown
Whoſe radiant honours once adorn'd his own.
Go, reign, he cried, and triumph o'er thy foes;
No other hope the race of Louis knows.
Yet think diviner preſents to receive,
Far more, my ſon, than royalty I give.
What boots renown in arms, ſhould heav'n withhold
Her light more precious than the pureſt gold?
Theſe worldly honours are a barren good;
Rewards uncertain on the brave beſtow'd:
A tranſient greatneſs, and a fading wreath
Blaſted by troubles, and deſtroy'd by death.
Empire more durable, for thee deſigned,
I come to ſhew thee, and inform thy mind.
Attend my ſteps through paths thou ne'er haſt trod,
And fly to meet the boſom of thy God.

Thus

Thus ſpoke the ſaint; they mount the car of light,
And ſwiftly traverſe the ætherial height.
Thus midnight light'nings flaſh, while thunders rowl,
And cleave the ambient air from pole, to pole.
Thus roſe Elijah on the fiery cloud;
The radiant æther with effulgence glow'd:
To purer worlds, array'd in glories bright,
The prophet fled, and vaniſh'd from the ſight.

Amidſt thoſe orbs which move by certain laws
Known to each ſage whom love of ſcience draws,
The ſun revolving round his axle turns,
Shines undiminiſh'd, and for ever burns.
Thence ſpring thoſe golden torrents, which beſtow
All vital warmth, and vigor as they flow.
From thence the welcome day, and year proceeds;
Through various worlds his genial influence ſpreads.
The rolling planets beam with borrowed rays,
And all around reflect the ſolar blaze;
Attract each other, and each other ſhun:
And end their courſes where they firſt begun.
Far in the void unnumber'd worlds ariſe,
And ſuns unnumber'd light the azure ſkies.
Far beyond all the God of heav'n reſides,
Marks ev'ry orbit, ev'ry motion guides.

Thither the hero, and the ſaint repair;
Myriads of ſpirits are created there,
Which amply people all the globe, and fill
The human body; ſuch th'Almighty's will.
There, with immortal ſpirits at his feet,
The judge incorruptible holds his ſeat.
The God eternal, in all climes ador'd
By diff'rent names, Jehova, Jove, or Lord.
Before his throne our plaintive ſorrows riſe;
Our errors he beholds with pitying eyes:
Thoſe ſenſeleſs portraits, figur'd by mankind,
To paint his image, and omniſcient mind.
All who on earth's inferior confines breathe,
Attend his ſummons through the gates of death.
The eaſtern ſage, with holy wiſdom fraught,
The ſons of ſcience, whom Confucius taught;
Thoſe, who ſucceed in Zoroaſter's cauſe,
And blindly yield ſubmiſſion to his laws:
The pale inhabitants of Zembla's coaſt,
That dreary region of eternal froſt;
Canadia's ſons, with fatal error blind,
Where truth illumines not the ſavage mind.
The gazing Dervis looks in vain around
At God's right hand no prophet to be found.

The

The Bonze, with gloomy, penitential brow,
Derives no comfort from his rigid vow.

At once enlightned, all the dead await
To hear their ſentence, and approaching fate.
That mighty Being, whoſe extended view,
And boundleſs knowledge looks all nature through,
The paſt, the preſent, and the future times,
Rewards their love, or puniſhes their crimes.
The prince approach'd not, in thoſe realms of light,
The throne inviſible to human ſight;
Whence iſſues forth the terrible decree
Which man preſumes too fondly to foreſee.

Is God, ſaid Henry to himſelf, unjuſt,
On whom the world's created beings truſt?
Will the Almighty not vouchſafe to ſave
For want of knowledge which he never gave?
Expect religion where it never ſhone;
And judge the univerſe by laws unknown?
His hand created all, and all will find
That heaven's high king is merciful, and kind.
His voice informs the whole, and ev'ry part;
Fair nature's laws are ſtamp'd on ev'ry heart.

Nature, the ſame through each inferior clime,
Pure, and unſpotted to the end of time,
By this the pagan's ſentence will proceed,
And pagan virtue is religion's deed.

While thus, with reaſon narrow, and confin'd,
On truth's myſterious he employ'd his mind,
A ſolemn, awful voice was heard around;
All heav'n, all nature ſhudder'd at the ſound.
Such were the thunders, which from Sinai's brow,
Diffus'd a horror through the plains below,
Each ſeraph glow'd with adoration's fire,
And ſilence reign'd through all the cherub choir.
The rolling ſpheres the ſacred accents caught,
And truths divine to other planets taught.
Diſtruſt thy mental pow'rs, nor blindly ſtray
As pride, or feebler reaſon points the way,
The high inviſible who rules above,
Eſcapes thy knowledge, but demands thy love.
His pow'r, and juſtice puniſh, and controul
Each wilful error of the ſtubborn ſoul.
To pure devotion be thy heart conſign'd,
Truth's radiant orb illumine all thy mind.

These

Theſe were the ſounds, when, through the fields of light,
A rapid whirlwind from the ætherial height
Convey'd the prince to dark, and dreary climes,
Like thoſe where Chaos reign'd in elder times.
No ſolar influence, like it's author mild,
Diffuſes comfort through the ſavage wild.
Angels abhor the deſolated waſte,
Which life's fair, fruitful bloſſom never grac'd.
Confuſion, death, each terror of deſpair,
Fix'd on his throne, preſides a tyrant there.
O heav'ns! what ſhrieks of woe, what piteous cries,
What ſulph'rous ſmoaks, what horrid flames ariſe!
What fiends, cried Bourbon, to theſe climes retreat!
What gulphs, what torrents burſt beneath our feet!
See here, the ſaint return'd, the gates of hell,
Which juſtice form'd, where impious ſpirits dwell.
Come, view the diſmal regions of diſtreſs;
Theſe paths are always eaſy of acceſs.
There ſquint-eyed Envy lay, whoſe poiſ'nous breath
Conſumes the verdure of each laurel wreath:
In night's impenetrable darkneſs bred,
She hates the living, but applauds the dead,
Her ſparkling eyes, which ſhun the orb of day,
Perceiving Henry, Envy turn'd away.

Near her, ſelf-loving, ſelf-admiring pride,
And down-caſt weakneſs, ever pale, reſide.
Weakneſs, which yields to each perſuaſive crime,
And crops the flow'r of virtue in it's prime.
Ambition there with head-ſtrong fury raves,
With thrones ſurrounded, ſepulchres, and ſlaves.
Submiſſive, meek Hypocriſy was nigh,
Hell in her heart, all heav'n in her eye.
There Int'reſt, father of all crimes, appear'd,
And blinded Zeal by cruelty rever'd.
Theſe wild, tyrannic rulers of mankind,
When Henry came, their ſavage air reſign'd.
Their impious troop ne'er reach'd his purer ſoul,
Such virtue yields not to their mad controul.
Who comes, they cried, to break the peaceful reſt
Of night eternal, and theſe ſhades moleſt?

Our hero view'd the ſubterraneous ſcene,
And ſlowly travell'd through the ranks obſcene.
Louis led on. — Oh heav'n! is that the hand,
Which murder'd Valois at the League's command?
Is that the monſter? yes, I know him well,
His arm ſtill holds the parricidal ſteel.
While Lab'rous prieſts proclaim the wretch divine,
And place his portrait on the hallow'd ſhrine,

Though

Though Rome, [illegible]
To hymns, and [illegible]

Princes, and kings, [illegible]
Meet in these realms [illegible]
Behold those tyrants [illegible]
Whose height but [illegible]
God pours his vengeance [illegible]
For vice committed, [illegible]
Death, from [illegible]
Cut short the [illegible]
No pomp of greatness [illegible]
Their beams of glory [illegible]
Now is no civil, [illegible]
To whisper error [illegible]
Once injur'd truth [illegible]
Displays each crime, [illegible]
Behold yon heroes [illegible]
Esteem'd as tyrants [illegible]
Now on their heads [illegible]
Form'd by them [illegible]
Close by their side, [illegible]
Each listless, feeble [illegible]
Whose indolence disgrac'd [illegible]
Meer airy forms, meer [illegible]

Siniſter counſellors on theſe await,
Once their imperious miniſters of ſtate.
Proud, avaritious, of immoral lives,
Who ſold what honours Mars, or Themis gives:
Sold what our fathers purchas'd by their blood,
And all that's precious to the great, and good.

Tell me, ſaid Henry, O ye ſons of eaſe,
Muſt tender ſpirits dwell in climes like theſe?
You, who, on flowry couches, paſs away
The tranquil moments of life's uſeleſs day.
Shall virtue's friends in fiery torments roll?
Whoſe faults have riſen from expanſe of ſoul.
Shall one miſtaken, momentary joy
Maturer Wiſdom's plenteous fruits deſtroy?
This, cried the prince, the lot of human race?
Condemn'd for endleſs ages to diſtreſs!
If all mankind one common hell devours,
Eternal tortures cloſe our tranſient hours,
Who was not more in non-exiſtence bleſt?
Who would not periſh at his mother's breaſt?
Far happier man! had God's creative hand
Form'd him leſs free, in innocence to ſtand:
Had God, thus awfully ſevere, beſtow'd
The ſole capacity of doing good.

Think

Think not, the ſaint replied, that ſinners feel
Vengeance too heavy, or deſerve not hell.
Think not the great creator of mankind
To theſe his works is cruel, or unkind.
Lord of all beings, he preſides above
With mercy infinite, and boundleſs love.
Though mortals ſee the tyrant in their God,
Parental tenderneſs directs his rod.
Let not theſe horrid ſcenes thy ſoul alarm;
Compaſſion checks the fury of his arm:
Nor endleſs puniſhments inflicts on thoſe
Whoſe faults from human imperfection roſe:
Whoſe pleaſures, follow'd by remorſe, have been
The tranſient cauſe of momentary ſin.
Such were his accents—to the realms of light
Both are convey'd with inſtantaneous flight.
Infernal darkneſs ſhuns thoſe flow'ry plains
Where ſpotleſs innocence for ever reigns.
There, in the floods of pureſt æther play
The beams refulgent of eternal day.
Each blooming ſcene ſeraphick joys beſtow'd;
And Henry's ſoul with unknown raptures glow'd.
There tranquil pleaſure ſpreads her ev'ry charm
Which thought can fancy, or which heav'n can form.

No

No cares ſollicit, and no paſſions move;
But all is govern'd by angelic love.
Far other love, than that of wild deſires,
Which groſſer ſenſe, and luxury inſpires.
The bright, the ſacred flame on earth unknown,
Which burns in heav'n, and heav'nly minds alone.
It's chaſte endearments all their hours employ,
And endleſs wiſhes meet with endleſs joy.
There dwell true heroes; there each pious ſage,
And monarchs once the glory of their age.
Thence Charlemagne, and Clovis turn their eyes
On Gallia's empire from the azure ſkies:
On golden thrones for ever plac'd ſublime,
And clad in honours unimpair'd by time.
There, fierceſt foes the happy union prove
Of pure affection, and a brother's love.
*Louis the wiſe, amidſt the royal band,
Tall as a cedar, iſſues his command.
Louis, of France the glory, and the pride,
Who rul'd our realms with juſtice by his ſide.
Oft' would he pardon, oft' relief ſupply;
And wipe the falling tear from ev'ry eye.
D'Amboiſe is ſtill commiſſion'd to attend;
His faithful miniſter, and warmeſt friend.

* Louis XII.

To him alone was Gallia's honour dear:
To him alone her homage was ſincere.
His gentler hands were ſullied not with blood;
His ev'ry wiſh was center'd in her good.

Oh ſpotleſs manners! bright, and halcyon days!
Worthy eternal memory, and praiſe.
Then wholeſome laws adorn'd, and bleſs'd the ſtate:
Subjects were happy, and the monarch great.
Return, ye halcyon days, with golden wing:
And equal bleſſings, equal honours bring.
Virtue, deſcend, another Louis frame
As rich in merit, and as great in fame.

Farther remote, thoſe worthy heroes ſtood,
Careleſs of life, and prodigal of blood,
Who died with tranſport for the public weal;
Led on by duty, not enrag'd by zeal.
Brave * Montmorency, †, Tremouille ‡, de Foix,
Who fought their paſſage to thoſe fields of joy.

* *Montmorency*] It would fill a volume, ſhould we ſpecify the ſervices done to the ſtate by this family.

† *Tremouille*] Amongſt many great men of this name, Guy de la Tremouille is particularly alluded to. He was ſirnamed *the Valiant*; carried the royal ſtandard: and refus'd the high conſtable's ſword in the reign of Charles VI.

‡ *de Foix*] Gaſton de Foix, duke of Nemours, and nephew to Louis XII. He was ſlain at the famous battle of Ravenna; having received fourteen wounds, and defeated the enemy.

There

There † Gueſclin drinks of pleaſures purer ſprings:
Gueſclin, th'avenger, and the dread of kings.
There too appear'd the * Amazonian dame,
The tott'ring throne's ſupport, and England's ſhame.

Theſe, cried the ſaint, who now poſſeſs the ſkies,
Like thee with glory dazzled Europe's eyes.
Virtue alone their ſimpler minds could move:
The church was nouriſh'd by their filial love.
Like me they honour'd truth's diviner name:
Our worſhip uniform, our church the ſame.
Say, why does Bourbon follow other laws,
Or why defend religion's weaker cauſe?

Time, with inceſſant flight prepar'd to roam,
Quits, and reviſits this terrific dome:

---

† *Gueſclin.*] France owed her preſervation to this great man, in the reign of Charles V. He conquered Caſtile, placed Henry de Tranſtamare upon the throne of Peter the cruel, and was conſtable of France, and Caſtile.

* *Amazonian Dame.*] Joan d'Arc (known by the name of the Maid of Orleans.] She was ſervant-maid at an inn; and born at the village of Domremy upon the Meuſe: being ſuperior to her ſex in ſtrength of body, and bravery of mind, ſhe was employed by the count de Dunois to retrieve the affairs of Charles VII. taken priſoner in a ſally at Compiegne in the year 1430, conducted to Rouen, tried as a ſorcereſs in an eccleſiaſtical court, and burnt by the Engliſh.

And

And pours with plenteous hand on all mankind
The good, and evil for each race deſign'd.
An altar high of maſſy iron bears
The fatal annals of ſucceeding years.
Where God's own hand has mark'd, nor mark'd in vain
Each tranſient pleaſure, each ſeverer pain.
There liberty, that haughty ſlave, is bound,
With chains inviſible encircled round.
Beneath the yoke ſhe bends her ſtubborn head,
Still unconſtrain'd, unconſcious of the deed.
This ſuppliant turn that hidden chain ſupplies
Wiſely conceal'd for ever from her eyes.
The fates appear her ſentence to fulfill:
Each action ſeems the product of free-will.

From thence, cried Louis, on the human race
Deſcends the influence of heav'nly grace.
In future times its pow'r thy tongue ſhall tell:
Its purer radiance all thy heart ſhall feel.
Thoſe precious moments God alone beſtows;
No mortal haſtens, and no being knows.
But Oh how ſlowly comes that period on
When God ſhall love, and own thee for his ſon!

Too long ſhall weakneſs hide thy brighter rays;
And lead thy ſteps through errors ſlipp'ry ways.
Teach him, kind heav'n, the happier, better road;
Shorten the days which part him from his God.

But ſee what crowds in long ſucceſſion preſs
hrough the vaſt region of unbounded ſpace.
ſe ſacred manſions to thy v v diſplay
unborn o ing of ne ture day.
ti ces ar r nigh,
e.
'd hour of birth,
heir e a their fall on earth.

The various changes of each life to come,
Their vices, virtues, and their final doom.
Draw near, for heav'n allows us to foreſee
What kings, and heroes ſhall deſcend from thee.
That graceful perſonage is Bourbon's ſon,
Form'd to ſupport the glory of the crown.
The warlike leader ſhall his triumphs boaſt
O'er Belgia's plains, and proud Iberia's coaſt.
To deeds more noble ſhall his ſon aſpire;
And wreaths more ſplendid firſt adorn his ſire.

On

On beds of lillies, near a tow'ring throne,
Two radiant forms before our hero ſhone.
Monarchs they ſeem'd, of high, imperious pride,
And Roman purple flow'd adown their ſide.
A ſubject nation couch'd beneath their feet,
And guards unnumber'd form'd the train complete.
Theſe, ſaid the ſaint, are doom'd to endleſs fame:
In all things ſov'reigns, ſave the royal name.
Richelieu, and Mazarin, deſign'd by fate
Immortal miniſters of Gallia's ſtate.
To them ſhall policy conſign her aid;
And fortune raiſe them from the altar's ſhade.
Rul'd by deſpotic pow'r, ſhall France confeſs
Great Richelieu's genius, Mazarin's addreſs.
* One flies with art before the riſing ſtorm:
One braves all danger in it's fierceſt form.
Both to the princes of our royal blood
With hate relentleſs enemies avow'd.
With high ambition, and with pride inſpir'd,
By all diſlik'd and yet by all admir'd.

* *One flies.*] Cardinal Mazarin was oblig'd to leave the kingdom in the year 1651; notwithſtanding he had the entire government of the queen Regent. Cardinal Richelieu on the contrary always maintain'd his ſituation in ſpite of his enemies, and the king, who was diſguſted at his behaviour.

Their

Their artful ſchemes, and induſtry ſhall bring
Plagues on their country, glory on their king.

O thou, great * Colbert, whoſe enlighten'd mind
Schemes leſs extenſive for our good deſign'd!
No luſtre [illegible] quals, none excells thy own,
Save that v[illegible]h gilds, and decorates the crown.
Nurs'd by thy [illegible] plenty reigns,
And pours her [illegible] lia's plains.
Colbert by gen'rous [illegible] y roſe:
[illegible] only ven[illegible] was [illegible] his foes.
[illegible] w[illegible] heav'nly grace,
[illegible] oc[illegible] l's race.
That race, whoſe blaſphemy could ne'er remove,
Or quench the beams of mercy, and of love.

What troops of ſlaves before † that monarch ſtand!
What numbers tremble at his high command!
No king did Gallia ever yet obey
With ſuch profound ſubmiſſion to his ſway.

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* Colbert was deteſted by the people. That blind, and ſavage monſter would have dug his body out of the ground; but the approbation of men of ſenſe, which at length prevailed, has rendered his name for ever dear, and reſpectable.

† *That monarch.*] Louis XIV.

Though

Though leſs belov'd, more dreaded in her eyes,
Like thee he claims fair glory's richeſt prize.
Firm in all danger, in ſucceſs too warm
When fortune ſmiles, and conqueſt meets his arm.
Himſelf ſhall cruſh, ſuperior to intrigue,
Full twenty nations join'd in pow'rful league.
Praiſe ſhall attend him to his lateſt breath,
Great in his life, but greater in his death.
Thrice happy age! when nature's laviſh hand
With all her graces ſhall adorn the land.
Thrice happy age! when ev'ry art refin'd
Spreads her fair poliſh o'er the ruder mind.
The muſe for ever our retreats ſhall love
More than the ſhades of Aganippe's grove.
From ſculptur'd ſtone the ſeeming accent flows;
With animated tints the canvaſs glows.
What ſons of ſcience in that period riſe,
Meaſure the univerſe, and read the ſkies!
The purer ray of philoſophic light
Reveals all nature, and diſpells the night.
Preſumptuous error from their view retreats;
Truth crowns their labours, and their joy compleats.
Thy accents too ſweet muſic, ſtrike mine ear,
Muſic, deſcended from the heav'nly ſphere.

'Tis

'Tis thine to ſooth, to ſoften, and controul
Each wayward paſſion of the ruffled ſoul.
Unpoliſh'd Greece, and Italy have own'd
The ſtrong inchantments of thy magic ſound.
The ſubjects rul'd by Gallia's pow'rful king
Shall bravely conquer, and as ſweetly ſing.
Shall join the poet's to the warrior's praiſe,
And twine Bellona's with Apollo's bays.
E'en now I ſee this ſecond age of gold
Produce a people of heroic mould.
Here num'rous armies ſkim before my ſight;
There fly the Bourbons eager for the fight.
At once his maſter's terror, and ſupport,
Great * Condé makes the flames of war his ſport.
Turenne more calmly meets the hoſtile pow'r,
In arms his equal, and in wiſdom more.

* *Condé.*] Louis de Bourbon, generally called the great Condé; and Henry viſcount de Turenne, have been look'd upon as the greateſt generals of their time. They have both gained very important victories; and acquired glory even in their defeats. The prince of Condé's genius ſeemed, as it was ſaid, more proper for a day of battle, and that of Mr. de Turenne for a whole campaign. It is certain at leaſt, that Mr. de Turenne gained conſiderable advantages over the great Condé at Gien, Etampes, Paris, Arras, and the battle of Dunes. We ſhall not however attempt to determine which was the greateſt man.

Aſſemblage

Aſſemblage rare! in * Catinat are ſeen
The hero's talents, and the ſage's mien.
Known by his compaſs † Vauban from the tow'r
Smiles at the tumult, and the cannon's roar.
England ſhall tell of ‡ Luxembourg's renown,
In war invincible, at court unknown.

* *Catinat.*] The marſhal de Catinat, born in 1637; he gained the battle of Staffarde, and Marſeilles: and obeyed without reluctance, or murmuring the marſhal de Villerois, who ſent him orders without conſulting him. He reſigned his command with the utmoſt compoſure; never complained of any perſon's treatment, aſked nothing of the king, and died like a true philoſopher at his country-ſeat at St. Gratien. He never augmented or diminiſhed his eſtate, and never for a moment acted unworthy his character as a man of temperance, and moderation.

† *Vauban.*] The marſhal de Vauban, born in 1633, the greateſt engineer that ever lived. He repaired upon a new plan of his own no leſs than 300 old fortifications, and built 33. He conducted 53 ſieges, and was preſent at 140 actions. He left behind him at his death 12 manuſcript volumes full of deſigns for the good of the ſtate: none of which has ever yet been executed. He was a member of the academy of ſciences, and did more honour to it than any other perſon, by rendering mathematics ſubſervient to the advantage of his country.

‡ *Luxembourg.*] Francis Henry de Montmorency, who took the name of Luxembourg; marſhal of France, and both duke, and peer of the realm. He gained the battle of Caſſel, under the direction of Monſieur, the brother of Louis XIV. and won the celebrated victories of Mons, Fleurus, Steinkerke, and Nerwinde, where he acted as commanding officer. He was confined to the Baſtile, and exceedingly ill treated by the miniſtry.

Onward

Onward I see the martial * Villars move
To wrest the thunder from the bird of Jove.
Conquest attends to bid the battle cease,
And leaves him sov'reign arbiter of peace.
Denain shall own brave Villars to have been
The worthy rival of the great Eugene.

What † princely youth draws near, whose manly face
United majesty, and sweetness grace?

* *Villars.*] It was the author's original design to mention no living character through the whole poem: and the rule proposed has only been deviated from in favour of the marshal duke de Villars. He gained the battle of Fredelingue, and that of the first Hocstet. It is remarkable that in this engagement he posted himself on the same spot of ground which the duke of Marlborough afterwards occupied, when he won that very signal victory of the second Hocstet, so fatal to France. Upon resuming the command of the army, the marshal was afterwards engaged in the famous battle of Blangis, or Malplaquet, in which twenty thousand of the enemy were slain; and the loss of which was owing to the marshal's being wounded. In the year 1712, when the enemy threatened to proceed to Paris, and it was deliberated whether Louis XIV. should not quit Versailles, the marshal de Villars defeated prince Eugene at Denain, dislodged the enemy from their post at Marchienne, raised the seige of Landrecy, took Douay, Quesnoy, and Bouchain at discretion, and afterwards agreed upon a peace at Radstat in the king's name, with the same prince Eugene, the emperor's plenipotentiary.

† *Princely youth.*] This poem was composed in the infancy of Louis XV.

See

See how unmov'd——Oh heav'ns! what ſudden ſhade
Conceals the beauties which his form diſplay'd!
Death flutters round; health, beauty, all is gone:
He falls juſt ready to aſcend the throne.
Heav'n form'd him all that's truly juſt, and good:
Deſcended, Bourbon, from thy royal blood.
Oh gracious God! ſhall fate but ſhew mankind
A flow'r ſo ſweet, and virtues ſo refin'd!
What could a ſoul ſo gen'rous not obtain!
What joys would France experience from his reign!
Produc'd, and nurtur'd by his foſt'ring hand
Fair peace, and plenty had enrich'd the land.
Each day ſome new beneficence had brought:
Oh how ſhall Gallia weep! alarming thought!
When one dark, ſilent ſepulchre contains
The ſon's, the mother's, and the ſire's remains.

Fall'n is the tree, and from it's ruins ſprings
An infant ſucceſſor to Gallia's kings.
A tender ſhoot, from whoſe increaſing ſhade
France may derive ſome ſalutary aid.
Conduct him, Fleury, to the throne of truth;
Wait on his years, and cultivate his youth.
Teach him ſelf-knowledge, and, if Fleury can,
Teach him that Louis is no more than man.

Inſpire each virtue which can life adorn;
igs for their ſubjects, not themſelves are born.
An) France, once more ariſe to day;
majeſty beneath his ſway.
cience, which retir'd before,
n thy fair temples, and adorn thy ſhore.
izure waters with thy navies ſweep:
he monarch of the hoary deep.
rom the Nile, the Euxine, and the Ind,
t by nature, or by art deſign'd,
demands thee for her ſeat;
eſt treaſures at thy feet.
Adieu to terrour, and adieu to war,
The peaceful olive be thy future care.

Purſued by envy, and diſtraction's crew,
* A chief renown'd advances to the view;
Eaſy, not weak, when glory ſpurs him on,
Engag'd by novelties, by trifles won.
Though luxury diſplays a thouſand charms,
And ſmiling pleaſure courts him to her arms,
Yet ſhall he keep all Europe in ſuſpenſe
By artful politics, and manly ſenſe.

* *A chief renowned.*] A true portrait of the duke of Orleans.

The

The world ſhall move as Orleans ſhall guide;
And ev'ry ſcience flouriſh at his ſide.
Empire, my ſon, himſelf ſhall never reach;
'Tis his the art of government to teach.

Now burſt the light'ning from the op'ning ſkies,
And Gallia's ſtandard wav'd before their eyes.
Iberia's troops, array'd in arms compleat,
The German eagle cruſh'd beneath their feet.
When thus the ſaint—no more remains the trace
Of Charles the fifth, his glory, or his race.
Each earthly being has it's final hour;
Eternal wiſdom let us all adore.
From thence all human revolutions ſpring:
E'en Spain from Bourbon ſhall requeſt a king.
Illuſtrious Philip ſhall receive the crown;
And ſit as monarch on Iberia's throne.
Surprize was ſoon ſucceeded by delight,
And Henry's ſoul enraptur'd at the ſight.
Repreſs thy tranſports, cried the ſaint, and dread
This great event, this preſent to Madrid.
Say, who can fathom heav'n's conceal'd intent,
Dangers may come, and Paris may repent.
Oh Philip! Oh my ſons! ſhall France, and Spain
Thus meet, and never be disjoin'd again!

ll fatal politics forbear
flames of diſcord, and of war!

s ſpoke — when lo! the ſcene withdrew,
aniſh'd from our hero's view.
ed portals clos'd before his eyes,
ſudden darkneſs overſpread the ſkies.
eaſt Aurora moving on
the golden chambers of the ſun.
robe o'er other climes was ſpread,
retir'd, and ev'ry flitting ſhade.
aroſe, with heav'nly ardor fir'd,
ual vigor all his ſoul inſpir'd.

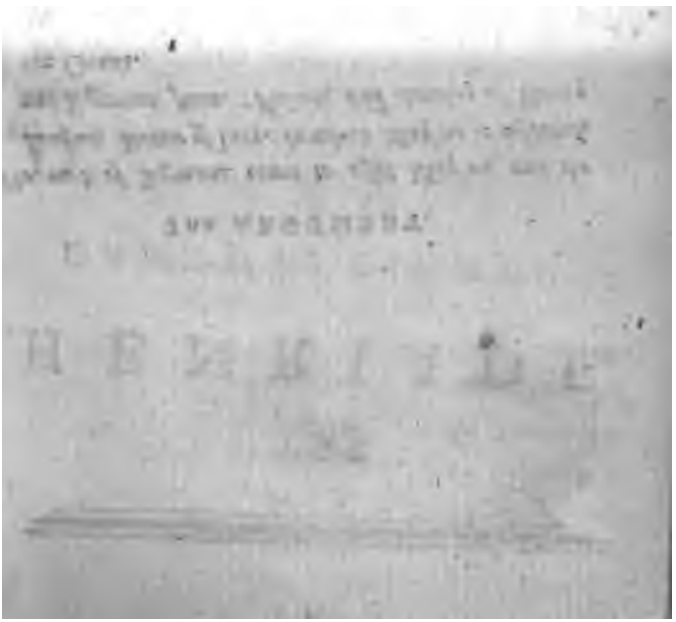
Fear, and reſpect, great Bourbon, now were thine:
Full on thy brow ſat majeſty divine.
Thus when before the tribes great Moſes ſtood,
Return'd at length from Sinai, and from God,
His eyeballs flaſh'd intolerable light;
Each proſtrate Hebrew ſhudder'd at the ſight.

THE HENRIADE.

CANTO the EIGHTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

The earl of Egmont *comes to aſſiſt* May'ne *and the League. Battle of* Ivry, *in which* May'ne *is defeated, and* Egmont *ſlain. Valour, and clemency of* Henry the Great.



THE HENRIADE.

CANTO the EIGHTH.

DEJECTED by their loſs, the ſtates appear
Leſs haughty, and aſſume an humbler air,
Henry, ſuch terrour in their hearts had wrought,
Their king creating ſchemes were all forgot;
Wav'ring and weak in counſel, and afraid
To crown their idol May'ne, or to degrade,
By vain decrees they labour to complete
And ratify a pow'r, not giv'n him yet.

‡ This ſelf-commiſſion'd chief, this king uncrown'd
In chains of iron rule his faction bound;

‡ He was declared by the parliament, which continued attached to him, lieutenant-general of the ſtate, and kingdom of France.

His willing ſlaves obedient to his laws,
Reſolve to fight and periſh in his cauſe;
Thus fluſh'd with hope, to council he convenes
The haughty lords, on whom his fortune leans.
They came: deſpair, and unextinguiſh'd hate,
And malice on their faded features ſate;
Some tremble in their pace, and feebly tread,
Faint with the loſs of blood in battle ſhed,
But keen reſentment prompts them to repair
Their loſſes, and revenge the wounds they bear.
Before the chief their ſullen ranks they range,
And graſp their ſhining arms, and vow revenge.
So the fierce ſons of earth, as fable feigns,
Where Pelion overlooks Theſſalia's plains,
With mountains piled on mountains, vainly ſtrove,
To ſcale the everlaſting throne of Jove.
When ſudden on a car of radiant light
Exalted, Diſcord flaſh'd upon their ſight;
Courage, ſhe ſaid, 'tis now the times demand
Your fixt reſolves, lo! ſuccour is at hand.
Firſt ran d'Aumale, and joyful from afar
Beheld the Spaniſh launces gleam in air;
Then cried aloud, 'tis come; th' expected aid,
So oft demanded, and ſo long delay'd.

War

Near to that hallow'd ſpot, where reſt rever'd
The reliques of our kings, their march appear'd;
The groves of poliſh'd ſpears, the targets bound
With circling gold, the ſhining helms around,
Againſt the ſun with full reflection play,
Rival his light and ſhed a ſecond day.
To meet their march the roaring rabble went,
And hail'd the mighty chief Madrid had ſent;
That chief was * Egmont; fam'd for martial fire,
Ambitious ſon of an unhappy ſire;
At Bruſſels firſt he drew the vital air;
His country's weal was all his father's care,
For that, the rage of tyrants he defied,
And in the cauſe of freedom, bravely died.
The ſervile ſon, as baſe as he was proud,
Fawn'd on that hand which ſhed his father's blood,
For ſordid int'reſt join'd his country's foes,
And fought for France, regardleſs of her woes.
Philip, on May'ne the warlike youth beſtow'd,
And arm'd him forth to be his guardian God;
Nor doubted May'ne, but ſlaughter and diſmay
Should ſpread to Bourbon's tent, when Egmont led the way.

* The earl of Egmont, ſon of admiral Egmont, who was beheaded at Bruſſels together with the prince de Horn.

With

With heedleſs arrogance their march they drew,
And Henry's heart exulted at the view,
Gods! how his eager hopes anticipate
And meet the moment that decides his fate.

Their ſtreams where Iton and fair Eura lead,
By nature bleſt, a fertile plain is ſpread,
No wars had yet approach'd the peaceful ſcene,
Nor warrior's footſtep preſs'd the flow'ry green,
The ſhepherds there, while civil rage deſtroy'd
The regions round, their happy hours enjoy'd,
Screen'd by their poverty, they ſeem'd ſecure
From lawleſs rapine and the ſoldier's pow'r,
Nor heard beneath their humble roofs the jar
Of arms, or clamour of the ſounding war.

Thither each hoſtile leader his array
Directs, and deſolation marks their way,
A ſudden horror ſtrikes the trembling floods,
The frighted ſhepherds ſeek the ſhelt'ring woods,
The partners of their grief attend their flight,
And bear their weeping infants from the ſight.

Ye hapleſs natives of this ſweet receſs!
Charge not at leaſt your king with your diſtreſs,

For

For peace he courts the combat, and his hand
Shall ſhed the bounteous bleſſing o'er the land;
He ſhares your ſorrows, and ſhall end your woes,
Nor ſeeks you, but to ſave you from your foes.

Along the ranks he darts his glancing eyes,
Swift as the winds his foaming courſer flies,
Proud of his load, he catches with delight
The trumpets ſound, and hopes the promiſ'd fight.

Crown'd with his laurels, at their maſter's ſide,
A well diſtinguiſh'd groupe of warriors ride,
†D'Aumont, beneath five kings a chief renown'd,
* Biron, whoſe name bore terrour in the ſound,
‡ His ſon, whom toil nor danger could reſtrain,
Who ſoon alas! — but he was faithful then;

† John D'Aumont, marſhal of France, who did wonders at the battle of Ivry, was the ſon of Peter d'Aumont and Frances de Sully, an heireſs of the ancient family of Sully. He ſerved under Henry II. Francis II. Charles II. Henry III. and Henry IV.

* Henry de Contand de Biron, marſhal of France, and grand maſter of the artillery. He was a great warriour, commanded the corps de reſerve at Ivry, and was very inſtrumental in gaining the victory.

‡ Charles Contand de Biron, ſon of the former. He conſpired afterwards againſt Henry IV. and was beheaded in the court of the Baſtile in 1602.

Grillion

Grillon and Sully by the guilty fear'd,
Chiefs whom the League deteſted, yet rever'd,
§ Turenne, whoſe virtues and unrival'd fame,
Won the fair honours of the Bouillon name,
Ill-fated pow'r alas! and ill maintain'd,
Cruſh'd in the birth, and loſt as ſoon as gain'd.
His creſt amid the band brave Eſſex wears,
And like a palm beneath our ſkies appears,
Among our elms the lofty ſtranger ſhoves
His growth, as if he ſcorn'd the native groves.
From his bright caſque with orient gems array'd
And burniſh'd gold, a ſtarry luſtre play'd;
Dear, valued gifts! with which his miſtreſs ſtrove
Leſs to reward his courage, than his love,
Ambitious chief! the mighty bulwark grown
Of Gallia's prince, and darling of his own.
Such was the monarch's train, with ſtedfaſt air
And firm, they wait the ſignal of the war,
Glad omens from their Henry's eyes they took,
And read their conqueſt ſure in his inſpiring look.

§ Henry de la Tour d'Orliegues, viſcount of Turenne, marſhal of France. Henry the great married him to Charlotte de la Mark, princeſs of Sedan, in 1591. The marſhal went on the wedding night to take Stenay by aſſault.

'Twas

'Twas then, afflicted with inglorious dread,
Unhappy May'ne perceiv'd his courage fled,
Whether at length his boding heart divines
The wrath of heav'n on his unjuſt deſigns,
Whether the ſoul prophetic of our doom,
Foreſees the dreary train of ills to come,
Whate'er the cauſe, he feels a chilling fear,
But veils it with a ſhew of ſeeming cheer,
Inſpires his troops with ardour of renown,
And fills their hearts with hopes that dwell not in his own.

But Egmont at his ſide, with glory fir'd,
And the raſh confidence his youth inſpir'd,
Fluſh'd for the fight, and eager to diſplay
His proweſs, chides his infamous delay.
As when the Thracian courſer from afar,
Hears the ſhrill trumpet and the ſound of war,
A martial fire informs his vivid eye,
He neighs, he ſnorts, he bears his head on high,
Impatient of reſtraint he ſcorns the rein,
Springs o'er the fence and ſcours along the plain;
Such Egmont ſeem'd, with beating heart he ſtood,
And in his eye the rage of battle glow'd.

Ev'n

Ev'n now he ponders his approaching fame,
And looks on conqueſt as his rightful claim;
Alas! he dreams not that his pride ſhall gain
Nought but a grave, in Ivry's fatal plain.

Bourbon at length drew near, and thus inſpir'd
His ardent warriors whom his preſence fir'd?
Ye ſons of France! your king is at your head,
You ſee your foes, then follow where I lead,
Mark well this waving plume amid the fight,
Nor let the tempeſt ſhade it from your ſight,
To that alone direct your conſtant aim,
Still ſure to find it in the road to fame.
Thus ſpoke the chief; his bands exulting hear,
And with new fury court the glorious war;
Then march'd, and as he went, his pious breaſt
With ſilent pray'rs the God of hoſts addreſs'd.
At once the legions ruſh with headlong pace
Behind their chiefs, and ſnatch the middle ſpace.
So where the ſeas with narrow Frith divide
Contabria's coaſt from Afric's deſert ſide,
If eaſtern ſtorms along the channel pour,
Sudden the fierce conflicting oceans roar,
Earth trembles at the ſhock, the ſheeted brine
Invades the ſkies, the ſun forgets to ſhine,

The

The trembling moor believes all nature hurl'd
In ruin, and expects the falling world.

Now lengthen'd with the ſpear the muſket ſpread
The carnage wide, and ſlew with double ſpeed,
That fatal engine in Bayonne deſign'd,
And fram'd by Diſcord to lay waſte mankind,
Strikes a twin death, and can at once afford
The worſt effect of fire, and havock of the ſword.
Trembled the ſtedfaſt earth beneath their feet
As ſword to ſword and lance to lance they met,
From rank to rank deſpair and horror ſtrode,
The ſhame of flight and impious thirſt of blood
Here from his ſtronger ſon the father flies,
There by the brother's arm the brother dies,
Nature was ſhock'd, and Eura's conſcious bank
Shrunk with abhorrence from the blood it drank.
Bourbon his path right on to glory clears
Through briſtly foreſts of portended ſpears,
O'er many a creſted helm his courſe he ſped,
Cloſe in his rear, ſerene and undiſmay'd
Went Mornay, thoughtful and intent alone
On Henry's life, regardleſs of his own.
So, veil'd in human ſhape, the poets feign
The gods engaged in arms on Phrygia's plain;

" So when an angel by divine command,
" With riſing tempeſts ſhakes a guilty land,
" Well pleas'd th'Almighty's orders to perform,
" He rides the whirlwind, and directs the ſtorm."
The royal chief his dread commands expreſs'd,
The prudent dictates of a hero's breaſt,
Mornay the mighty charge attentive caught,
And bore it where the diſtant leaders fought,
The diſtant leaders to their troops convey
The word, their troops receive it, and obey.
They part, they join, in various forms are ſeen,
One ſoul informs and guides the vaſt machine.
Swift thro' the field return'd in haſte he ſeeks
The prince, accoſts, and guards him while he ſpeaks.
But ſtill the ſtoic warrior kept unſtain'd
With human blood, his inoffenſive hand,
The king alone employ'd his gen'rous thought,
For his defence th' imbattled field he ſought,
Deteſted war, and ſingularly brave
Knew boldly to face death, but never gave.

Turenne already with reſiſtleſs pow'r,
Repulſ'd the ſhatter'd forces of Nemours;
Scarce d'Ailly fill'd the plain, with dire alarms,
Proud of his thirty years conſum'd in arms;

Still

Still ſpite of age the vet'ran chiefs diſplays
The well-ſtrung vigour of his youthful days;
Of all his foes, one only would preſume
To match his might, a hero in the bloom;
Now firſt indignant to the field he came,
And parted eager for the goal of fame.
New to the taſte of Hymen, yet he fled
The chaſte endearments of his bridal bed,
Diſdain'd the trivial praiſe by beauty won,
And panted for a ſoldier's fame alone.
That cruel morn, accuſing heav'n in vain,
And the curs'd League that call'd him to the plain,
His beauteous bride with trembling fingers laced
His heavy corſlet on her hero's breaſt,
And cover'd with his helm of poliſh'd gold
Thoſe eyes which ſtill ſhe languiſh'd to behold.

Tow'rds d'Ailly the fierce youth, deſpiſing fear,
Spurr'd his proud ſteed, and couch'd his quiv'ring ſpear,
Their headlong courſes trampled, as they fled,
The wounded heaps, the dying and the dead;
Poachy with blood the turf and matted graſs,
Sink fetlock deep beneath them as they paſs.

Swift

Swift to the ſhock they come; their ſhields ſuſtain
The blow, their ſpears well pointed but in vain,
In ſcatter'd ſplinters ſhine upon the plain.
So when two clouds with thunder fraught draw near,
And join their dark encounter in mid air,
Struck from their ſides the light'ning quivers round,
Heav'n roars, and mortals tremble at the ſound.
Now from their ſteeds with unabated rage
Alighting ſwift, a cloſer war they wage;
Ran Diſcord to the ſcene, and near her ſtood,
Death's horrid ſpectre, pale and ſmear'd with blood.
Already ſhine their fauchions in their hands,
No kind preventing pow'r their rage withſtands,
The doom is paſt, their deſtiny commands.
Full at each other's heart they aim alike,
Nor knows their fury at whoſe heart they ſtrike;
Their bucklers claſh, thick ſtrokes deſcend from high,
And flakes of fire from their hard helmets fly,
Blood ſtains their hands, but ſtill the temper'd plate
Retards a while and diſappoints their fate.
Each wond'ring at the long unfiniſh'd fight,
Eſteems his rival, and admires his might;
'Till d'Ailly with a vig'rous effort found
The fatal paſs, and ſtretch'd him on the ground.

His

His faded eyes for ever cloſed remain,
And his looſe helmet rowls along the plain;
Then ſaw the wretched chief, too ſurely known,
The kindred features, and embraced his ſon.
But ſoon with horror and remorſe oppreſs'd,
Revers'd the guilty ſteel againſt his breaſt.
That juſt revenge his haſt'ning friends oppoſe;
When furious from the dreadful ſcene he roſe;
Forth to the woods his cheerleſs journey ſped,
From arms for ever and from glory fled,
And in the covert of a ſhaggy den,
Dwell a ſad exile from the ways of men.
There when the dawning day ſalutes the ſkies,
And when at eve the chilling vapours riſe,
His unexhauſted grief ſtill flows the ſame,
Still eccho ſighs around his ſon's lamented name.
Tender alarms, and boding terrours brought
The bride enquiring to the fatal ſpot,
Uncertain of her doom, with anxious haſte
And fault'ring knees between the dead ſhe paſs'd,
'Till ſtretch'd upon the plain her lord ſhe ſpied,
Then ſhriek'd, and ſunk expiring at his ſide.
The damps of death upon her temples hung,
And feeble ſounds ſcarce parted from her tongue,

Once

Once more her eyes a laſt farewel aſſay'd,
Once more her lips upon his lips ſhe lay'd,
Within her arms the lifeleſs body preſs'd,
Then look'd, and ſigh'd, and died upon his breaſt.

Deplor'd examples of rebellious ſtrife,
Ill-fated victims, father, ſon, and wife,
Oh may the ſad remembrance of your woe,
Teach tears from ages, yet unborn to flow,
With wholeſome ſorrow touch all future times,
And ſave the children from their father's crimes.

But ſay what chief diſperſes thus abroad
The flying League, what hero, or what god?
'Tis Biron, 'tis his youthful arm o'erthrows
And drives along the plain his ſcatter'd foes.
D'Aumale beheld, and madd'ning at the ſight,
Stand faſt he cried, and ſtay your coward flight;
Friends of the Guiſe and May'ne, their vengeance due
Rome and the church and France expect from you;
Return then, and your priſtine force recall,
Conqueſt is theirs who fight beneath d'Aumale.
Foſſeuſe aſſiſting and Beauvean ſuſtain
Their part, and rally the diſorder'd train,

Before

Before the van d'Aumale his ſtation took,
And the cloſed lines caught courage from his look.
The chance of war now flows a backward courſe,
Biron in vain withſtands the driving force,
Neſle and Augenne within his ſight are ſlain,
And Parabere and Clermont preſs the plain,
Himſelf ſcarce liv'd, ſo faſt the purple tide
Flow'd from his wounds, and happier, had he died.
A death ſo glorious with unfading fame
For ever had adorn'd the hero's name.

Soon learn'd the royal chief to what diſtreſs
The youth was fall'n, courageous in exceſs;
He lov'd him, not as monarchs condeſcend
To love, but well, and plainly as a friend,
Nor thought a ſubject's blood ſo mean a thing,
A ſmile alone o'erpaid it from a king.
Hail heav'n-born friendſhip! the delight alone
Of noble minds, and baniſh'd from the throne.
Eager he flies, the gen'rous fires that feed
His heart augment his vigour and his ſpeed.
He came, and Biron kindling at the view,
His gather'd ſtrength to one laſt effort drew,
Cheer'd by the well-known voice again he plies
The ſword, all force before the monarch flies,

The

leems thee from th'unequal ſtrife
be faithful and deſerve thy life.

Hark a ud peal comes thund'ring from afar,
'Tis Diſcord blows afreſh the flames of war,
To thwart the monarch's virtue, with new fires
His fainting foes the beldam fiend inſpires;
She winds h e woods around
And mountai nfernal ſound.
Swift to d'Al... notes impart
Their pow'r, he ... mons at his heart;
Bourbon alone he ſeeks he ...iſt'rous throng
Cloſe at his heels tumultuous pour along.
So the well-ſcented pack, long train'd to blood,
Deep in the covert of a ſpacious wood,
Bay the fierce boar to battle, and elate
With heedleſs wrath ruſh headlong on their fate,
The ſhrillneſs of the cheering horn provokes
Their rage, and ecchoes from the diſtant rocks.
Thus ſtood the monarch by the croud incloſed,
An hoſt againſt his ſingle arm oppoſed,
No friend at hand, no welcome aid he found,
Abandon'd, and by death incompaſs'd round.
'Twas then his fainted fire his ſtrength renew'd
With tenfold force and vigour unſubdued,

Firm as a rock, pois'd on it's baſe he ſtood,
That braves the blaſt, and ſcorns the daſhing flood.
Who ſhall relate, alas! what heroes died
In that dread hour on Eura's purple ſide.
Shade of the firſt of kings, do thou diffuſe
Thy ſpirit o'er my ſong, be thou my muſe.
Now from afar his gath'ring nobles came,
They died for Bourbon, and he fought for them,
When Egmont ruſh'd with yet unrival'd force,
To check the ſtorm and t'avert the monarch's courſe.

Long had the chief, miſled by martial pride,
Sought Henry thro' the combat far and wide,
Nor cared he, ſo his vent'rous arm might meet
That ſtrife, for aught of danger or defeat.
Bourbon, he cried, advance; behold a foe
Prepar'd to plant freſh laurels on your brow;
Now let your arm it's utmoſt might diſplay,
Ours be the ſtrife, let us decide the day.
He ſpoke, and lo! portentuous from on high
A ſtream of light'ning ſhot along the ſky,
Slow peals of mutt'ring thunder growl'd around,
Beneath the trembling ſoldier ſhook the ground.
Egmont, alas! a flatt'ring omen draws,
And dreams that heav'n ſhall combat in his cauſe,

That partial nature in his glory ſhar'd,
And by the thunder's voice his victory declar'd.
At the firſt onſet with full force applied
His driving faulchion reach'd the monarch's ſide,
Faſt flow'd a ſtream of trickling blood, tho' ſlight
The wound, and Egmont triumph'd at the ſight.
But Bourbon unconcern'd receiv'd the blow,
And with redoubled ardour preſs'd his foe;
Pleas'd when the field of glory could afford
A conqueſt hardly earn'd and worthy of his ſword.
The ſtinging ſmart ſerv'd only to provoke
His rage, and add new vigour to his ſtroke.
He ſprings upon the blow; the champion reels,
And the keen edge within his boſom feels,
O'erthrown beneath the trampling hoof he lies,
And death's dim ſhadow ſkims before his eyes,
He ſees the dreary regions of the dead,
And ſhrinks and ſhudders at his father's ſhade.

Then firſt, their leader ſlain, th'Iberian hoſt
Declin'd the fight, their vaunted ſpirit loſt,
Like a contagion their unwarlike fear
Siez'd all the ranks and caught from van to rear.
Gen'ral and ſoldier felt the ſame diſmay,
Nor longer theſe command, nor thoſe obey.

Dov

Down fall the banners, routed and o'erthrown
And yelling with unmanly ſhrieks they run;
Some bend the ſuppliant knee, ſubmiſſive join
Their hands, and to the chain their wriſts reſign,
Some from the fierce purſuer wildly fled,
And to the river ſtretch'd their utmoſt ſpeed,
There plunged downright, amid the foaming tide
They ſink, and meet the death they would avoid.
The waves incumber'd intermit their courſe,
And the choak'd ſtream recoils upon it's ſource.

May'ne in the tumult of this troubled ſcene
Lord of himſelf, afflicted yet ſerene,
Survey'd his loſs ſtill tranquil and ſedate,
And ev'n in ruin hoped a better fate.
D'Aumale, his eye with burning rage ſuffus'd,
His cruel ſtars and daſtard bands accus'd.
All's loſt, he cried, ſee where the cowards fly,
Illuſtrious May'ne! our taſk then is to die.
Die! ſaid the chief, live rather to replace
Our fortune, and ſuſtain the cauſe you grace,
Live to regain the laurels we have loſt,
Nor now deſert us, when we need you moſt.
Fly then, and where they ſtraggle o'er the plain,
Glean up the wreck and remnant of our train.

He hears, reluctant ſobs his paſſion ſpeak,
And tears of anguiſh trickle down his cheek,
A ſlow compliance ſullenly he pays,
And frowning ſtern at the command, obeys.
Thus the proud lion whom the Moor has tam'd,
And from the fierceneſs of his race reclaim'd,
Bows down beneath his ſwarthy maſter's hand,
And bends his ſurly front at his command,
With low'ring aſpect ſtalks behind his lord,
And grumbles while he crouches at his word.

Meanwhile in flight unhappy May'ne confides,
And cloſe within the walls his ſhame he hides;
Prone at the monarch's feet the vanquiſh'd wait
From his award, the ſentence of their fate;
When from the firmament's unfolded ſpace
Appear'd the manes of the Bourbon race;
Louis in that important hour came down,
To gaze intent upon his godlike ſon,
To prove if the triumphant chief could tame
His ſoul to mercy, and deſerve his fame.
Th'aſſembl'd captives by their looks beſought
The monarch's grace, but trembled at their lot;
When thus with gentle, but determin'd look,
The ſuppliant crowd the mighty chief beſpoke.

" Be

" Be free, and uſe your freedom as you may,
" Free to take arms againſt me, or obey;
" On May'ne or me let your election reſt,
" His be the ſceptre who deſerves it beſt,
" Chuſe your own portion, your own fate decree,
" Chains from the League, or victory with me."

Aſtoniſh'd that a king with glory crown'd,
And lord of the ſubjected plains around,
Ev'n in the lap of triumph ſhould forego
His right of arms, and vantage o'er the foe,
His grateful captives hail him at his feet
Victorious, and rejoice in their defeat.
No longer hatred rankles in their minds,
His might ſubdued them, and his bounty binds,
Proudly they mingle with the monarch's train,
And turn their juſter vengeance upon May'ne.

Now Bourbon merciful and mild had ſtay'd
The carnage, and the ſoldier's wrath allay'd;
No longer thro' the ranks he cleaves his way,
Fierce as the lion bearing on his prey,
But ſeems a bounteous deity, inclin'd
To quell the tempeſt, and to cheer mankind.

Peace o'er his brows had ſhed a milder grace,
And ſmooth'd the warlike terrours of his face;
Snatch'd from the jaws of the devouring ſtrife,
His captives feel themſelves reſtor'd to life,
Their dangers he repells, their wants ſupplies,
And views and guards them with a parent's eyes.

Fame, the ſwift meſſenger of falſe and true,
Still as ſhe flies encreaſing to the view,
O'er mountains and o'er ſeas, from clime to clime,
Expatiates, rapid as the flight of time.
Millions of piercing eyes to fame belong,
As many mouths ſtill ply the reſtleſs tongue,
And round with liſt'ning ears her miſcreant form is hung.
Where'er ſhe roams, credulity is there,
And curioſity with craving ear,
And doubt, and hope, and ever-boding fear.
With the ſame ſpeed ſhe bears upon her wings
From far, the glory and the ſhame of kings,
And now unfolds them, eager to proclaim
Great Henry's deeds, and fill the nations with his name.
From Tagus ſwift to Po the tidings ran,
And echo'd thro' the lofty vatican.

Joy

Joy to the north the ſpreading ſounds convey,
To Spain, confuſion, terrour and diſmay.
Ill-fated Paris, and thou faithleſs League,
Ye prieſts, full-fraught with malice and intrigue,
How trembled then your temples, and what dread
Diſaſt'rous, hung o'er ev'ry guilty head!
But ſee your guardian deity appears,
See May'ne returning to diſpel your fears!
Tho' foil'd, not loſt, not hopeleſs tho' o'erthrown,
For ſtill rebellious Paris is his own.
With ſpecious gloſs he covers his defeat,
Calls ruin, victory, and flight, retreat,
Confirms the doubtful, and with prudent aim
Seeks by concealing, to repair his ſhame.
Tranſient, alas! the joy that art ſupplies,
For cruel truth ſoon ſcatter'd the diſguiſe,
The veil of falſehood from their fate withdrew,
And open'd all it's horrors to their view.

Not thus the fury cried, with raging mind,
Shall Diſcord's pow'r be conquer'd, and confin'd:
'Tis not for this theſe wretched walls have ſeen
Torrents of blood, and mountains of the ſlain:
'Tis not for this the raging fires have ſhone,
That hated Bourbon might enjoy the throne.

Henceforth by weakneſs be his mind aſſail'd,
Weakneſs may triumph where the ſword has fail'd.
Force is but vain; all other hopes are gone:
For Henry yields but to himſelf alone.
This day ſhall beauty's charms his boſom warm;
Subdue his valour, and unnerve his arm.

Thus Diſcord ſpoke; and, through the fields of air,
Drawn by fierce hatred on her blood-ſtained car,
Swiftly repair'd to Cytherea's grove
Aſſur'd of vengeance, and in ſearch of love.
Clouds of thick darkneſs then obſcur'd the day,
Nature turned pale, and horror marked her way.

THE

HENRIADE.

CANTO the NINTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

Deſcription of the temple of love. Diſcord *implores his power to enervate the courage of* Henry IV. *The hero is detained ſome time by* Madame d'Eſtrée, *ſo well known under the name of the fair* Gabrielle. Mornay *diſengages him from his miſtreſs, and the king returns to the army.*

The am'rous tranſports, and the ſoft deſires,
Which fan the boſom to the fierceſt fires.

Thus ſmiles th'alluring entrance of the dome:
When far within the daring footſteps roam,
What ſcenes of horror round the altar roll,
And ſhake the libertine's preſuming ſoul!
No ſounds harmonious feaſt the raviſh'd ears,
No more the lovely train of joys appears.
Conſcious imprudence, murmurs, fears, and hate
With darkneſs blaſt the ſplendors of the ſtate.
Stern jealouſy, whoſe fault'ring ſtep obeys
Each fell ſuſpicion that her bliſs betrays;
Ungovern'd rage, with ſharpeſt venom ſtor'd,
Rears in the van his unrelenting ſword.
Theſe malice joins, who with perfidious face
Smiles at the triumphs of the ſavage race.
Penſive repentance, ſhudd'ring in the rear,
Heaves the deep groan, and ſhow'rs the plenteous tear.

Full in the center of this horrid court,
Where pleaſure's fell companions all reſort,
Love waves for ever his fantaſtick rod,
At once a cruel, and a tender god.

His

Here, whilſt ſpontaneous harveſts fill the plains,
No ſeaſon changes, and no wretch complains.
Here peace unfading ſooths the ſons of earth,
Such peace as reign'd at nature's earlier birth.
With hand of ſoft indulgence ſhe diſplays
Celeſtial quiet, and ſereneſt days.
Here ev'ry lawn in plenty's robe is dreſs'd,
With ev'ry ſweet but innocency bleſs'd.
From ſide to ſide the ſtreams of muſic roll,
Whoſe ſoothing ſoftneſs faſcinates the ſoul.
In plaintive ſonnets burns the lover's flame
Who boaſts his weakneſs, and exults in ſhame.
Each day, encircled with the fragrant ſtore,
The little godhead's ſmiles their pray'rs implore;
Eager they preſs to learn the pois'nous art
At once to pleaſure, and entrance the heart.
Deluſive hope, whoſe charms ſerenely ſhine,
Conducts the train to love's enchanting ſhrine.
The beauteous graces half-unveil'd advance,
Indulge the ſong, and join the decent dance.
Voluptuous pleaſure on the velvet plain
In calm tranquillity attends the ſtrain.
Lo! by her ſide the heart-enchaining ſighs,
Fix'd ſilence ſtrongly ſpeaking to the eyes;

The

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His infant pow'r the fates of mortals bears,
With wanton ſmiles diſpenſing peace, and wars.
Smooth flows deceit's inſinuating art
Which lifts the captive, animated heart.
He counts his triumphs from the ſplendid throne
While proſtrate ſons of pride the conqu'ror own.
Careleſs of good he plies his ſavage ſkill,
And dwells applauding on each deed of ill.

Now Diſcord opens through the ranks of joy
Her vengeful paſſage to the kindred boy.
Fierce in her hand the brandiſh'd torches glow,
Her eye-balls flaſh, and blood diſtains her brow.
Where then, ſhe cries, thy formidable darts!
Recline they pointed for more ſtubborn hearts?
If e'er my venom, mingl'd with thy fire,
Has fann'd the flame, and rais'd the paſſion higher,
If oft' for thee I trouble nature's laws,
Riſe, fly to vengeance of my injur'd cauſe.
Cruſh'd by a victor king my ſnakes are lay'd,
Who joins the olive to the laurel's ſhade.
Amidſt the tumults of a civil war
Meek-ſtepping Clemency attends his car;

Fix'd

Fix'd to the ſtandards, waving in the wind,
She ſooths in Diſcord's ſpite the rebel mind.
One vict'ry gain'd, my throne, my empire falls;
Lo! Henry ſhow'rs his rage on Paris' walls.
He flies to fight, to conquer, and forgive;
Faſt bound in brazen chains muſt Diſcord live.
'Tis thine to check the torrent of his courſe,
And drop ſoft poiſon on his valour's ſource.
Yes, bend the victim to thy conqu'ring dart,
And quell each virtue of his ſtubborn heart.
Of old, (and well thou know'ſt,) thy ſov'reign care
Bow'd great Alcides to th' imperial fair.
By thee proud Anthony's enervate mind
For Cleopatra's form each thought reſign'd;
In flight inglorious o'er the ocean hurl'd
For her he quits the empire of the world.
Henry alone reſiſts thy dread command,
Go, blaſt the laurels in his daring hand.
His brows entwine with myrtle's am'rous charms,
And ſink the ſlumbring warrior in thy arms.
Fly to ſupport; he ſhakes my tott'ring throne:
Go, ſhield an empire, and a cauſe thine own.
The monſter ſpoke: the trembling roof around
Returns the horrors of the dreadful ſound.

Stretch'd

Stretch'd on his flow'ry couch, the liſt'ning god
With artful ſmiles conſented at her nod.
Arm'd with his golden deaths reſov'd he flies
Along the bright dominion of the ſkies.
With pleaſures, ſports, and graces in his train
The zephyrs bear him to the Gallic plain.

Straight he diſcovers with malicious joy
The feeble Simois, and the fields of Troy;
And laughs, reflecting in thoſe ſeats renown'd
O'er many a palace mould'ring on the ground.
Venice from far, fair city! ſtrikes his ſight,
The prodigy of earth, and art's delight;
Which tour's ſupreme as ocean's godhead gave
Her pow'r full empire o'er th' encircling wave.
Sicilia's plain his rapid flight retards,
Where his own genius nurs'd the paſt'ral bards.
Where fame reports through ſecret paths he led
The wand'ring waves from am'rous Alpheu's bed.
Now quitting Arethuſa's lovely ſhore
Swift to Vaucluſia's ſeats his courſe he bore;
Aſylum ſoft: in life's ſerener days
Where loveſick Petrarch ſigh'd his penſive lays.

Fr

n thence his eyes ſurvey the fav'rite ſtrand
ere * Anet's walls uproſe at his command:
ere art's rich toils ſuperior rev'rence claim,
ſtill beams forth Diana's cypher'd name.
re on her tomb the joys, and graces ſhow'r
ateful mem'ry each fragrant flow'r.

ow to the wand'rer Ivry's plain appears:
monarch, ready for ſeverer cares,
re firſt with ſofter pleaſures ſooths his breaſt,
lulls his thunders to a tranſient reſt.
and his ſide the warrior youth diſplay'd
ue the labours of the ſylvan ſhade.
godhead triumphs in his future pain,
pens his arrows, and prepares his chain,
winds, which erſt he ſmooth'd, his nod alarms,
peaks, and ſets the elements in arms.
n ev'ry ſide he calls the furious ſtorms;
eight of clouds the face of heav'n deforms.
impetuous torrent ruſhes from the ſky;
thunder rolls, the livid lightnings fly:
h boiſt'rous brother at his mandate ſprings
earth lies ſhadow'd with their marky wings.

* Anet was built by Henry II. for Diana de Poitiers, whoſe
rs are intermixed with all the ornaments of that caſtle. It
ated not far from the plains of Ivry.

Bright

Bright Phœbas ſinks with night's incumbent load,
And conſcious nature ſhudders at the god.

O'er the dark plains through miry, dubious ways
Alone, and comfortleſs the monarch ſtrays:
When watchful love diſplays the torch's light,
Whoſe twinkling radiance ſtrikes upon his ſight.
The hoſtile ſtar, with fatal joy betray'd,
He ſwiftly follows through the dreary ſhade.
Such fatal joy deluded wand'rers ſhew,
Led by the vapour's tranſitory glow;
The guide malignant through the midnight gloom
Quits not the wretch, but leads him to his doom.
Once in the horrors of this lone retreat
Roam'd a fair virgin's ſolitary feet.
Silent, the centre of the fort within,
She waits her father from the battle's din;
Loyal in council, vet'ran in the plain,
Who ſhone the foremoſt of his ſov'reign's train:
*D'Eſtrée her name, and nature's guardian care
Had ſhowr'd her treaſures to adorn the fair.

* *D'Eſtrée*] Gabrielle D'Eſtere, of an ancient family i Picardy, daughter, and grand-daughter of the grand maſter the ordonnance; eſpouſed to the lord of Liancourt, and fin dutcheſs of Beaufort. Henry IV. became violently in love wit her during the civil wars; he went ſometimes in a private dre to ſee her. One day he even diſguiſed himſelf as a peaſant, pa ſed through the midſt of the enemies guards, and arrived at h houſe, not without ſome danger of being taken.

Bea

Beauty leſs fair the Grecian maid poſſeſs'd,
Whoſe guilt betray'd her Menelaus' reſt.
With charms inferior Cleopatra glow'd,
Whoſe eyes the lord of Italy ſubdued,
Whilſt to the ſhore th' enamour'd Cydnians move,
And incenſe ſhed as to the queen of love.

The nymph was now at that unſteady age
When headſtrong paſſions all the mind engage.
No lovers yet their ſighing vows impart,
Though form'd for love, yet gen'rous was her heart.
Thus the fair beauties of the bluſhing roſe
Coy in their ſpring to wanton zephyr cloſe:
But the full luſtre of their ſtores diſplay
To the kind influence of a ſummer's day.

Cupid, preparing to enſnare the dame,
Slyly approaches with a borrow'd name.
No dart, no torch his little hands employ,
In voice, and figure an unmeaning boy.
"From yonder ſtream to this enchanting dome
"The halpleſs May'ne's tremendous conqu'ror come."
Full through her ſoul the ſoft infection ran;
She pants to captivate the godlike man.

A livelier bloom her graceful features prove,
Which crowns the triumphs of applauding love.
What could he doubt? with charms celeſtial ſpread
Th' attractive virgin to the king he led.
With double glow each ornament of art
nature's guiſe enſlaves th' enamour'd heart.
golden treſſes floating in the air
kiſs the riſing boſom of the fair;
ſtart to view the heav'nly ſweets diſplay'd
By native innocence more lovely made.
No ſtern, no gloomy low'r, which puts to flight
Each thought of love, of beauty, and delight;
But the mild ſoftneſs of a decent ſhame
The cheek juſt tipping with the pureſt flame:
Commanding rev'rence, which excites deſires,
And ſheds when conquer'd love's increaſing fires.

Now the arch god with each enchanting grace
Diffus'd reſiſtleſs beauties o'er the place.
The plenteous myrtle with ſpontaneous birth
Springs from the boſom of the lib'ral earth.
It's am'rous foliage decorates the glade,
And wooes the thoughtleſs to it's fatal ſhade.
Till bands unſeen th'entangled ſtep betray;
Fear bids depart, but pleaſure wins their ſtay.

Soft

Soft through the ſhade a ſoothing Lethe rolls,
Where happy lovers with inebriate ſouls
Quaff long oblivion to departed fame;
So unreſiſted love's all conqu'ring flame!
How chang'd the ſcene! here ev'ry boſom glows;
Pour'd from each ſweet th'entrancing venom flows.
Love ſounds throughout: around, the feather'd choir
Indulge the ſong and burn with mutual fire.
The hind ariſing e're the dawn of day
To Ceres' golden treaſures bends his way;
Now ſtops aghaſt: now heaves the plaintive ſighs,
And feels the new born paſſion with ſurprize.
No more his ſoul the toils of harveſt move;
He dwells delighted on the ſcenes of love:
Whilſt heedleſs of her flock the maiden ſtands,
And drops the ſpindle from her fault'ring hands.
Could fair D'Eſtrée reſiſt the magic charm?
What pow'r can guard 'gainſt love's prevailing arm.
Superior foes her virgin-boſom load;
At once her youth, an hero, and a god.
Meanwhile the king with dauntleſs ſoul prepares
In thought to mingle with the battle's cares.
Some ſubtle dæmon plies his ſecret art,
And free-born virtue ſighing quits the heart.

To

To ſofter ſcenes his am'rous ſoul betray'd
Sees, hears, and loves alone the heav'nly maid.
But now the chieftains of th'embattled band
With ardent vows their abſent king demand;
They ſhudder'd for his life, but little knew
Their fears were only to his glory due:
Immers'd in grief the ſoldier's conqu'ring pride
Sinks to deſpair, no Henry for their guide.
Thy guardian pow'r, O France, no longer ſtays
To grant continuance of the ſoft delays:
At Louis' nod deſcending from the ſkies
Swift to the ſuccour of his ſon he flies.
Alighting now o'er earth's extended round
He ſeeks a mind for wiſdom's ſtores renown'd,
Not where pale, hungry, ſpeechleſs ſtudents claim
Fix'd in a midnight gloom her ſacred name,
But in fair Ivry, midſt the din of arms,
Where the flaſh'd warriors glow with conqu
charms.
At length the genius ſtays his ardent flight,
Where Calvin's floating banners ſpread to fight.
There Mornay he addreſs'd; when reaſon leads,
Her ſolid influence conſecrates our deeds.
As o'er the heathen world ſhe pour'd her ray,
Whoſe virtues chriſtians bluſhing might ſurvey,

Re

Reaſon Aurelius' ſentiments refin'd,
And ſhower'd ideas over Plato's mind.

Severe, but friendly Mornay knew the art
At once to mend, and captivate the heart.
His deeds more rev'rence than his doctrines move,
Each virtue met his fond, parental love.
Full ſteel'd to pleaſure, covetous of toils
He look'd on dangers with undaunted ſmiles.
No pois'nous frauds of palaces controul
His nobly-ſtubborn purity of ſoul.
Thus Arethuſa's genial waters flow
Soft to the boſom of the deep below,
A chryſtal pure, unconſcious of a ſtain,
Spite of the billows of the foaming main.

The gen'rous Mornay by the goddeſs led
Haſte to the ſeats, where rapt'rous pleaſure ſhed
Her ſoothing opiate on the victor's breaſt,
And lull'd awhile the fates of France to reſt.
Triumphant love each laviſh charm employs
To blaſt his glory with redoubled joys.
A waſte of tranſports fill the round of day,
Tranſports which fly too ſwiftly to decay.
To vengeance fir'd the little god deſcry'd
Mornay with heav'n-born wiſdom for his guide.

Full at the warrior-chief he points his dart
To lull his ſenſes, and enthrall his heart.
Thick fall the blunted ſhafts, Mornay awaits
The king's return, and eyes th'accurs'd retreats.

Faſt by the ſtream, 'midſt nature's rich perfume,
Sacred to ſilent eaſe where myrtles bloom,
D'Eſtrée on Henry laviſh'd all her charms,
Melting he glow'd, and languiſh'd in her arms.
No cooling change their bliſsful moments know,
Soft from their eyes the tears of rapture flow;
Tears, which redouble ev'ry fond delight,
And heav'nly feelings of the ſoul excite;
Fluſh'd with the full blown rage of keen deſires,
Which love alone can paint, for love alone inſpires.

The wanton youths unfolds the hero's veſt,
Whilſt ſmiling pleaſures fan his ſoul to reſt.
One holds the cuiraſs reeking from the plain,
One graſps the ſword, yet never worn in vain;
And laughs, whilſt poiſing in his hand he ſhews
The bulwark of the throne, and terror of its foes.

From Diſcord's voice the ſtrains of inſult roll,
Each cruel tranſport brooding in her ſoul,
With active fury at the fav'ring hour
To rouſe the ſerpent of confed'rate pow'r.

Whilſt

Whilſt Henry riots in the ſoft repoſe,
She wakes to vengeance his relentleſs foes.
Now in the fragrant gardens of delight
Mornay appears: he bluſhes at the ſight
Their ſtartled boſoms mutual fears engage,
And a dead ſilence chains th' approaching ſage.
But looks in ſilence bow'd to earth impart
A pow'rful language to the ſov'reign's heart;
And ſadneſs low'ring in the clouded face
Proclaims at once his weakneſs, and diſgrace.
Ill had another taken Mornay's care,
Love from the guilty few accuſers ſhare.
Fear not, he cries, our anger; reſt at eaſe;
Who points my error cannot fail to pleaſe:
Worthy of thee our boſom ſhall remain;
'Tis well: and Henry is himſelf again.
Love now reſigns that virtue he betray'd:
Fly, let us quit this ſoft, inglorious ſhade.
Yes, quit the ſcenes, where my rebellious flame
Would fondling ſtill the ſilken fetters frame.
Self conqueſt ſurely boaſts the nobleſt charms,
We'll brave the pow'r of love in glory's arms;
Scatter deſtruction o'er th' extended ſhore,
And ſheath our error in the Spaniard's gore.
Theſe gen'rous words the ſage's ſoul inſpire:
Yes, now my ſov'reign beams with native fire.

Each rebel paſſion feels thy conqu'ring reins,
O great protector of thy country's plains.
Love adds freſh luſtre to the blaze of fame,
For triumphs there ſuperior greatneſs claim.
He ſaid; the monarch haſtens to depart,
But oh! what ſorrows load his am'rous heart!
Still, as he flies, he cannot but adore,
His tears he cenſures, yet he weeps the more.
Forc'd by the ſage, attracted by the fair,
He flies, returns, and quits her in deſpair.
D'Eſtrée unable to ſuſtain the ſtrife
Falls proſtrate 'reſt of colour, as of life.
A ſudden night invades her beauteous eyes;
Love who perceiv'd it, ſent forth dreadful cries.
Pierc'd to the ſoul, leaſt death's eternal ſhade
Should rob his empire of the lovely maid:
Should ſpoil the luſtre of ſo fair a frame,
Deſtin'd through France to ſpread the genial flame.
Wrapt in his arms, again her eyelids move,
And gently open to the voice of love.
The king ſhe names, the king demands in vain,
Now looks, now cloſes her bright eyes again.
Love bath'd in ſorrow for the ſuff'ring fair
Recall'd her ſinking ſpirit by his pray'r;

With

With flatt'ring hopes her ſolaced ſoul betray'd,
And ſooth'd thoſe evils which himſelf had made.

Mornay of ſteady, and relentleſs mind,
Led on the monarch ſtill but half reſign'd.
Firm force, and godlike virtue point the way,
Whilſt glory's hands the laurel wreath diſplay;
And love indignant at the victor's fame,
Flies far from Anet to conceal his ſhame.

THE

HENRIADE.

CANTO the TENTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

The king returns to the army. Renews the ſiege. The duel betwixt Turenne *and* Aumale. *A famine in the city. The king relieves the inhabitants. Heaven at length recompenſes his virtues. Truth deſcends to enlighten him.* Paris *opens her gates and the war is finiſhed.*

THE HENRIADE.

CANTO the TENTH.

THOSE fatal moments loſt in ſoft repoſe
Had waked the courage of the vanquiſh'd foes.
Rebellion breath'd again, and faction's ſchemes
Fluſh'd the deluded throng with golden dreams.
Yet vain their hopes, for ſmit with generous fame
And active zeal the martial Bourbon came,
Eager to reap the harveſt he had ſown
And make the field of conqueſt all his own.
Again his banners wav'd aloft in air,
And Paris ſaw them with renew'd deſpair.
Again the chief before her walls appears
Scarce yet recover'd from a ſiege's fears;
Thoſe very walls, where yet ſulphureous ſmoke
With deſolation marks the cannon's ſtroke,
Which now with ruins had beſtrew'd the land
Had not compaſſion check'd the hero's hand;

Where

When the bright angel, whoſe obedience ſtill
Guardian of France, performs th' Almighty's will,
Bad his ſoft breaſt with tender mercies glow,
Withheld his arm, and ſtopp'd the falling blow.
Through the king's camp no voice was heard around
But ſongs of mirth, and joy's tumultuous ſound.
While each brave warriour, anxious for the fray,
With eyes impatient marks the deſtin'd prey.
Mean time the haughty legions all diſmay'd,
Preſs'd round their prudent chief, and ſued for aid;
When thus Aumale, of brave impetuous ſoul,
Abhorring counſel, and above controul;
" We have not yet ſo learn'd our warfare here
" To ſneak to hiding-holes, and crouch for fear,
" Curs'd be the man whoſe counſel thither tends;
" The foe comes forward—let us meet them, friends.
" Not tamely wait till other vantage calls,
" And ruſt in ſloth beneath theſe coward walls;
" On then, and conquer—fortune oft will ſpare
" A ſmile to crown the efforts of deſpair.
" Frenchmen attack'd, already are o'erthrown—
" Seek then your ſafeties from yourſelves alone.
" Ye chiefs, who hear me, haſte where glory calls,
" Know, ſoldiers, know your leaders are your walls.

He

He ſpoke—amaz'd the Leaguers heard each ſound,
And turn'd their eyes in ſilence to the ground.
He bluſh'd with ſhame, and in each leaders face
Read their refuſal, and his own diſgrace.
"Ye will not follow then, ye heroes tame,
"Nor wiſh I baſely to ſurvive the ſhame;
"Well—ſhrink at dangers ſtill—ſo ſhall not I—
"Alone I go—to conquer or to die."

He ſaid; and from the city gate in martial pride
Boldly advanc'd with firm impetuous ſtride.
Before his ſteps the ſhrill-tongued herald went,
To hurl defiance at each warrior's tent.
E'en to the king's abode the martial came,
And challeng'd combat in the hero's name.
"Ye daring ſons of glory, loud he cried,
"Now be your valour with your fortune tried,
"Aumale in ſingle combat waits you here,
"By me he calls to arms;—ſtand forth, appear."

The valiant chiefs the deſperate challenge heard,
Their zeal rekindling at each haughty word,
Each warriour ſtern impatient for the fray,
Hoped the king's voice, and hail'd the glorious day.
Courage in all had form'd an equal right.
Turenne alone found favour in his ſight.

"Go

" Go, ſaid the prince, chaſtiſe the daring foe,
" France to thy hands ſhall all her glory owe;
" Remember, ſoldier, 'tis a glorious cauſe,
" Thy own, thy king's, thy country and thy laws:
" I'll arm thee for the fight—the monarch ſaid,"
And from his girdle loos'd the ſhining blade.
When thus Turenne — " by this good ſword I ſwear,
" By thee, my king, each ſubject's darling care,
" Thus nobly honour'd in my prince's voice,
" My ready zeal ſhall never ſhame thy choice."

He ſpoke; while manly valour flufh'd his face,
And his heart ſprung to meet the king's embrace;
Then to the field, impetuous as a flood,
Ruſh'd where Aumale the daring champion ſtood.

To Paris' walls ran all the Leaguer-bands,
While round their king his faithful army ſtands.
With ſtedfaſt eye, which anxious care reveal'd,
Each ſide beheld their champion take the field.
While voice and geſture on each part unite
To warm each hero for the dreadful fight.

Mean time a cloud the vaulted ſky deforms,
Pregnant it ſeem'd with more than common ſtorms,

While

le from its womb of darkneſs, ſtrange to tell,
t forth in flames the monſtrous brood of hell.
re was hot mad, which frantic leaps all bounds,
Diſcord ſmiling on her thouſand wounds,
re artful policy deſigning ſly,
a heart of falſehood and with ſcowling eye;
re the mad dæmon too of battles ſtood,
eaguer-gods and drunk with human blood.
er they haſte, and land on Paris walls,
ale, their League, the cauſe, their intereſt calls.

hen lo! an angel from the azure ſky,
faithful ſervant of the God on high,
ended — round his head in ſplendour play
a that eclipſe the luſtre of the day.
rings of fire he ſhaped his chearful flight,
mark'd his paſſage with a train of light.
itful olive-branch one hand ſuſtain'd,
ge of happy days and peace regain'd.
ther hand upheld a flaming ſword,
ſhook the terrors of th' eternal Lord;
: ſword with which th' avenging angel arm'd
e the firſt-born — confounded and diſarm'd
ſt at once ſhrunk all the friends of hell,
le to the ground their pointleſs weapon's fell.

And

And reſolution ſicken'd all o'erthrown
By ſome reſiſtleſs force from hands unknown.
So Dagon worſhipp'd on Philiſtia's ſhore,
Whoſe purple altars ran with human gore;
Before the ark with tott'ring ruin nods,
And the fall'n idol owns the God of Gods.

Paris, the king, the army, heav'n and hell
Witneſs'd the combat;—at the trumpets ſwell
On to the field the ready warriours came,
Conſcious of valour, and a thirſt for fame.
Their hands unus'd the cumbrous weight to weild,
Diſdain'd to fight beneath the glittering ſhield,
The ſpecious armour of inglorious knight
Proof 'gainſt all blows, and dazzling to the ſight;
They ſcorn'd th' equipment of ſuch coward dreſs,
Which lengthening combat, made all danger leſs.
In courage firm advanc'd each haughty lord,
Man againſt man, and ſword oppos'd to ſword.
" O God of kings, the royal champion cried,
" Judge thou my cauſe, and combat on my ſide;
" Courage I vaunt not of, an idle name,
" When heav'nly juſtice bars the warrior's claim;
" Not from myſelf, I dare the glorious fight,
" My God ſhall arm me who approves my right."

To whom Aumale, " in deeds of valour known
" Be my reliance on this arm alone.
" Our fate depends on us, the mind afraid
" Prays to his God in vain for needful aid.
" Calm in the heav'ns he views our equal fight,
" And ſmiling conqueſt proves the hero's right.
" The God of wars is valour—ſtern he cry'd,"
And with a look of fell contemptuous pride
Gaz'd on his rival, whoſe firm modeſt mind
Spoke in his face, couragious and reſign'd.

Now ſounds the trumpet, to the dubious fray
Ruſh the brave chiefs impatient of delay.
Whate'er of ſkill, whate'er of ſtrength is known,
By turns each daring champion proves his own.
While all around the troops with anxious ſight,
Half pleas'd, half frighted, view the deſperate fight.
The ruſhing ſwords caſt forth promiſcuous rays,
Blinding the eye-ſight with their trembling blaze,
As when the ſun athwart the ſilver ſtreams
Darts his ſtrong light, and breaks in quivering beams.
The thronging crouds around with eyes intent
Look on amaz'd, and wait the dread event.
With nervous ſtrength and fury uncontrouled,
Full of himſelf, and as a lion bold

Seems

Seems ſtern Aumale; the whiles his rival brave,
Nor proud of ſtrength, nor paſſions headlong ſlave,
Collected in himſelf awaits his foe,
Smiles at his rage, and wards each furious blow.
In vain Aumale his utmoſt efforts tries,
His arm no more its wonted ſtrength ſupplies,
While cool Turenne the combat's rage renews,
Attacks with vigour, and with ſkill perſues,
Till proud Aumale ſinks baffled to the ground,
And his hot blood flows reeking from the wound;
The champion falls; hell ecchoes with deſpair,
And dreadful ſounds affright the troubled air.
"League, thou art all o'erthrown, the prize is won,
"Bourbon, thou haſt it now—our reign is done."
The wretched people with lamenting cries
Atteſt their grief, and rend the vaulted ſkies;
Aumale all weak, and ſtretch'd upon the ſand,
His glitt'ring ſword fall'n uſeleſs from his hand,
Fainting, yet ſtrives freſh vigour to regain,
And ſeems to threaten ſtill, tho' all in vain.
Fain would he ſpeak, while deep-fetcht lab'ring breath
Denies him utterance in the pangs of death.
Shame's quick'ning ſenſe augments his furious air,
And his red eyeballs flaſh extreme deſpair.

eaves, he ſinks, he ſtruggles all in vain,
oſen'd limbs fall lifeleſs on the plain;
Paris' walls he lifts his cloſing eye,
n dies indignant with a deſperate ſigh.
enne, thou ſaw'ſt him die, and at each look
trembling nerves with ſhudd'ring horrors ſhook,
n to thy mind thy own approaching fall
e full, and thou waſt conquer'd with Aumale.

he ſoldiers now to Paris gates repair,
with ſlow ſteps their breathleſs hero bear.
anc'd with woe, all ſilent, and amaz'd
a the bleeding corpſe the people gaz'd,
t deep-gaſh'd wound, that front with gore be-
ſpread,
t mouth now fallen, and that unpropp'd head.
ſe eyes which e'en in death tremendous ſtare,
le the fixt ſight caſt forth a livid glare,
y ſaw—compaſſion, ſhame, diſgrace and fear
ak'd up each cry, and dry'd the falling tear.
as ſolemn ſtillneſs all. When lo, a ſound
ch teem'd with horror pierc'd the wellkin round.
now th aſſailants with tumultuous cries
and th attack, and hope the promis'd prize.

Mean

Mean-time the king, whom milder thoughts engag
Calm'd their high tranſports, and repreſs'd their r
Stubborn howe'er, and adverſe to his will,
Howe'er ungrateful, 'twas his country ſtill;
Hated by ſubjects whom he wiſh'd to ſave,
The mercies they denied, his virtue gave;
Pleas'd if his bounty could their crimes efface,
And force the wretched to accept of grace.
All deſperate means he ſhudder'd to employ,
He ſought to conquer Paris not deſtroy,
Famine perhaps, and lengthen'd ſcenes of woe
Might bend to law a proud miſtaken foe;
Brought up in plenty, with abundance fed,
To eaſe and all the train of pleaſures bred;
His people preſt by want's impulſive ſting
Might ſeek for mercy from their patriot king.

Rebellion's ſons, whom vengeance fain would
Miſtook for weakneſs Henry's pious care,
His valour all forgot, in ſtubborn pride
They brav'd their maſter, and the king defied.

But when no more along the ſilver Seine
The frieghted veſſels bear the golden grain,

hen deſperate famine with her meagre train
ith death her conſort ſpreads her baneful reign,
vain the wretch ſends forth his piteous cries,
oks up in vain for food and gaſping dies.
ie rich no more preſerve their waſting health,
t pine with hunger in the midſt of wealth.
o ſound of joy th'afflicted city knows,
o ſound, but ſuch as witneſs'd direful woes.
o more their heads with feſtive chaplets crown'd,
ſongs of joy they ſend the goblet round.
o wines provoke exceſs, no ſavoury meats
icken the jaded appetite. Thro' the lone ſtreets,
maciate, pale, with dead dull ghaſtly glare
hey wander victims of the fiend Deſpair.
he weak old man worn out with hunger's rage
es his child periſh in its cradled age;
re drops a family entire, and there
roveling in duſt, and worn with meagre care,
he hagged wretches in life's lateſt ſtage
ght for an offal with relentleſs rage.
in would the living prey upon the dead,
hile the dry bones are kneaded into bread.
hat will not miſery do? This curſt repaſt
omotes the work of death, and proves their laſt.

Mean

Mean time the prieſts, thoſe rev'ren'd ſons of p
Who preach up faſting which they never ſhare,
Batten'd in plenty, deaf to hunger's cries,
Which from their bounty met no wiſh'd ſupplies
Yet went they forth with true fanatic zeal
To preach thoſe virtues which they could not fe
To the poor wretch, death hanging on his eyes,
Their liberal hand would ope the friendly ſkies;
To ſome they talk'd of vengeance ſent from Go
And Henry puniſh'd with th'Almighty's rod;
Of Paris ſav'd by heav'n's immediate love,
And manna dropping from the clouds above;
O'eraw'd by pow'r, by artful prieſts deceiv'd,
The croud obſequious what they taught believ'd;
Submiſſive, half content, reſign'd their breath,
Nay, happy too, they triumph'd in their death.

With foreign troops, to ſwell affliction's tide
The famiſh'd city ſwarm'd on every ſide;
Their breaſts where pity never learn'd to glow
Luſted for rapine, and rejoic'd in woe.
Theſe came from haughty Belgia's plains, and t
Helvetia's monſters, hireling friends or foes.
To mercy deaf, on miſery's ſons they preſs
And ſnatch the little from extreme diſtreſs.

Not for the ſoldier's plunder, hidden ſtore,
And heap'd up riches, uſeful now no more;
Not urg'd by luſt, and lured by beauty's charms,
To force the virgin from her mother's arms;
Their murd'rous torments rag'd for food conceal'd
Supports laid up, and pittance unrevea'd.

A woman — God! muſt faithful memory tell
A deed which bears the horrid ſtamp of hell!
Their flinty hearts which never felt remorſe
Robb'd of her little all with brutal force.
One tender infant left, her late fond care
The frantic mother eyed with fell deſpair.
Then furious all at once, with murd'rous blade
Ruſh'd where the dear devoted offſpring lay'd;
The ſmiling babe ſtretch'd forth its little arms;
's helpleſs age, ſweet looks, and guileleſs charms
oke daggers to her, whilſt her boſom burns
ith madd'ning rage, remorſe, and love by turns.
in would ſhe backward turn, and ſtrives to ſhun
e wretched deed which famine wiſhes done.
rice did ſhe rear the ſword, and all diſmay'd
ice did ſhe trembling drop the bloodleſs blade.
furious grown in hollow voice ſhe cries
urs'd be the fruitful bed, and nuptial ties,

" And

" And thou unhappy offspring of my womb,
" Brought into being to receive thy doom,
" Didſt thou accept this idol boon of life
" To die by famine, or theſe tyrant's ſtrife?
" Should'ſt thou eſcape their unrelenting rage
" Will pinching hunger ſpare thy ſofter age?
" Then wherefore ſhould'ſt thou live? to wee
vain
" A wretched wanderer o'er thy parent ſlain.
" No, die with me, 'ere keen reflection knows
" With bitter anguiſh to augment thy woes.
" Give me — thou ſhalt — nor wait the formal gr
" Give back the blood thy helpleſs mother gave.
" I will entomb thee, and the world ſhall ſee
" A deſperate crime unheard of yet in me."
She ſaid, and frantic with extreme deſpair
Plung'd the keen poinard in her darling heir.

Hither by hunger drawn, the ruffians ſped
Whilſt yet the mother on her infant fed.
Their eyes with eager joy the place ſurvey
Like ſavage tigers gloating on their prey.
With furious wiſh they ſcan the manſion o'er,
Then ruſh in rage and burſt the jarring door.

When, dreadful ſight! a form with horror wild,
That ſeem'd a woman, o'er a murder'd child
Set all aghaſt, and in his reeking blood
Bath'd her fell hands, and ſought a preſent food.
"Yes, cried the wretch, the bloody deed is done,
Look there, inhuman monſters—'tis my ſon.
Theſe hands had never worn this purple hue,
Nor this dear offspring periſh'd but for you.
Now, ruffians, now with happy tranſport ſtrike,
Feed on the mother and the babe alike.
Why heaves your breaſt with ſuch unuſual awe?
Have I alone offended nature's law?
Why ſtare you all on me? ſuch horrid food
Befits ye beſt, ye luſtful ſons of blood."

Furious ſhe ſpoke, and ſtaring, deſperate wild,
Plung'd home the ſword, and died upon her child.
The dreadful ſight all pow'r of ſpeech controuls,
And harrows up e'en theſe barbarian ſouls.
In dire amaze they caſt their eyes around,
And fear an angry God in every ſound;
While the whole city, at the ſcene diſmay'd,
Call'd loud for death, the wretches laſt kind aid.
E'en to the king the dreadful rumour ran,
His bowels yearn'd—he felt himſelf a man.

At each recital tender paſſions roſe,
And tearful mercy wept a nation's woes.

O God, he cried, to whom my thoughts are bare,
Who knoweſt all I can, and all I dare,
To thee I liſt theſe hands unſtain'd with blood,
Thou know'ſt I war not 'gainſt my country's good.
To me impute not nor their crimes nor woes,
Let Mayenne ſay, from whence the ruin flows.
For all theſe ills let him advance the plea,
Which tyrants only uſe, neceſſity;
To be thy country's foe, Mayenne, be thine,
To be its father, be that duty mine.
I am their father, and would wiſh to ſpare
Rebellious children with a father's care.
Should my compaſſion then but madly arm
A deſperate rebel to extend his harm?
Or muſt I loſe my regal crown to ſhew
Indulgent mercy on a ſubject foe?
Yes—let him live, and if ſuch mercy coſt
So dear a price as all my kingdoms loſt,
Let this memorial dignify my grave,
To rule o'er foes I ſought not, but to ſave.

He ſaid, and bad the ſtorms of vengeance ceaſe,
And huſh'd the tumults with returning peace.

Paris

Paris again her chearful accents heard,
And willing troops obey'd their Henry's word.
Now on the walls the throng impetuous ſwarms,
And all around, pale, trembling, waſted forms,
Stalk like the ghoſts, which from the ſhades of night,
Compell'd by magic force, reviſit light,
When potent magi with enchantments fell
Invoke the pow'rs below, and ſtartle hell.
What admiration ſwell'd each happy breaſt
To find a guardian in their foe profeſt!
By their own chiefs deſerted and betray'd,
An adverſe army lent a willing aid.
Theſe pikes, which late dealt ſlaughter all around,
With deſperate force no longer rear'd to wound,
Now kindly rais'd to ſecond Henry's care,
On their ſtain'd points the cheering nurture bear.
" Are theſe, ſaid they, the monſters of mankind?
" Are theſe the workings of a tyrant mind?
" This the proud king, ſad outcaſt of his God,
" His paſſions eaſy ſlave, and people's rod?
" No, 'tis the image of that pow'r above,
" Who acts with juſtice, and delights in love;
" He triumphs, yet forgives, nor ſeeks to ſhew
" Revenge's malice on a conquer'd foe.

" Nay

" Nay more, he comforts, and with royal grace
" Extends aſſiſtance to a rebel race.
" Be Diſcord baniſh'd from this glorious hour,
" And our blood flow but to cement his pow'r;
" And ſteady zeal, no longer faction's ſlave,
" For him employ that life, he wiſh'd to ſave."

Such was the language Paris' ſons expreſt,
While ſoft emotions fill'd each grateful breaſt.
But who alas! can ſtrong aſſurance ground
On fickly friendſhip, which exhales in ſound?
What hopes from ſuch a race ſo light and vain,
Who only idly riſe to fall again?
For now the prieſts, whoſe curſt deſigning arts
Had rais'd the flames of diſcord in their hearts,
Flock'd round the people—O ye ſons of ſhame,
" Cowards in war, and chriſtians but in name,
" Is't thus your weakneſs from your God would fly,
" Think on the martyrs and reſolve to die;
" Think on the paths their holy army trod,
" Nor for preſerving life, offend your God.
" Think of the crown religion's ſure to bring,
" Nor wait for pardon from a tyrant king.
" Fain would he lead your ſteady faith aſtray,
" And warp your conſcience to his dangerous way.

With

" With zeal defend religion's holy laws,
" Death has no terrors in a chriſtian cauſe."

So ſpake they vengeful, and with purpoſe dire
Blacken'd the king, 'till fell rebellion's fire
Flam'd out afreſh, and full of deſperate ſtrife
They ſcorn to own the debt of forfeit life.
Midſt all theſe clamours Henry's virtue known
Pierc'd thro' the ſkies to God's eternal throne.
Louis, from whom the Bourbon race begun,
Saw now the roll of time completely done,
When his ſon's error ſhould be purg'd away,
And pure religion beam her certain ray.
Then from his breaſt fled all the train of fears,
And faith eſtabliſh'd dried up all his tears.
Then ſoothing hope, and fond paternal love,
Prov'd his ſure guides to heav'nly paths above.

Before all time, in pure effulgence bright,
The God of Gods had plac'd his throne of light;
Heav'n is beneath his feet; pow'r, wiſdom, love,
Compoſe his eſſence; while the ſaints above,
Triumphant hoſts, partake unfading joys,
Which neither grief diſturbs, nor time deſtroys.
He ſpeaks, the earth is chang'd, and frail man
The ſport of error, and in councils blind,

Events perceiv'd, but cauſes undeſcried,
Accuſe God's wiſdom in their ſelfiſh pride.
Such were the Goths of old, and barb'rous Huns
The numerous Turk, and Afric's tawny ſons.
All nations have their mighty tyrant, all
Riſe in their turns, and haſten to their fall.
Yet not for ever tyrants ſway their land,
Oft falls the ſcepter in more favour'd hands,
And heav'n's vice-regents, in their actions known,
Diſpenſe God's favour's from a royal throne.

Now Louis, ſire of Bourbon's glorious race,
In plaintive words addreſs'd the throne of grace.
Lord of the world, if from theſe azure ſkies
Thou look'ſt on mortals with conſidering eyes,
See how rebellion's hateful treaſon ſtains
The generous ſons on fam'd Lutetia's plains.
If all unmindful of a ſubject's awe,
They ſpurn their king, nor heed the royal law,
'Tis for thy faith their ardent boſoms feel,
And diſobedience ſprings from holy zeal.
Behold the king, of tried illuſtrious worth,
The terror, love, example of the earth,
With ſo much virtues could'ſt thou form his mind,
To leave him pathleſs, and in errors blind?

Muſt thy moſt perfect work forego all bliſs,
And only Henry thank his God amiſs?
Let him henceforth miſtaken notions ſhun,
Give France a maſter and the church a ſon.
The ready ſubjects to their monarch bring
And to his ſubjects reſtore the king.
So in thy praiſe may all our hearts unite,
And a whole city worſhip God a-right.

His humble pray'rs th'eternal maker heard,
And ſpoke aſſent; earth trembled at his word:
The Leaguers ſtood amaz'd, and Henry's breaſt
Glow'd with that faith which God himſelf impreſt.
When from her manſion, near th'eternal throne,
Truth dear to mortals, tho' ſometimes unknown,
Deſcends a veil of clouds, with ample ſhade
Conceal'd from mortal ken the lovely maid,
Till by degrees, as at th'approach of day,
The ſhadowy miſt melt all diſſolv'd away:
Full to the ſight now all the goddeſs ſhone,
Clear as heav'n's light, and chearful as the ſun.

Henry, whoſe boſom from his early youth
Had felt the longing of eternal truth,

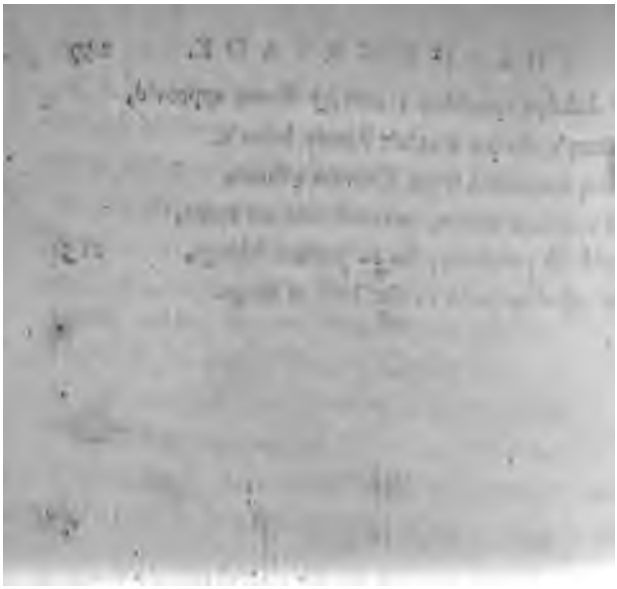
With

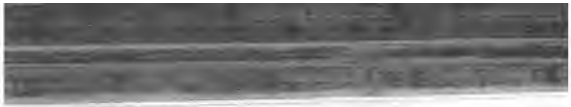
With faith avow'd, and pure religion glows,
Which baffles man, and reaſon darkly knows;
With will convinc'd reveres the holy ſee,
Which always one, howe'er diſpers'd and free;
Beneath one chief adores in every place,
In all her happy ſaints, God's wond'rous grace.
Chriſt, for our ſins who ſhed his pureſt blood,
Now, for his choſen flock, the living food,
To the king's ſelf who bows with ſecret dread,
Shews his true godhead in the hallow'd bread;
The monarch, deep impreſt with holy awe,
Adores the wonders of the ſacred law.

Now ſainted Louis, at the Lord's command,
The peaceful olive waving in his hand,
Came down from heav'n; a ready guide to bring
To Paris op'ning walls their convert king.
In God's own name, by whom all monarchs reign,
He enter'd Paris; while the Leaguer train
Bow ſubmiſſive, e'en the meddling prieſts
Are dumb, and all around with jocund feaſts
And cries of joy the vaulted heav'n's ring,
And hail at once a conqu'rer, father, king.
Henceforth all nations own'd his regal ſtate,
Too ſoon determined, as began too late.

'he Auſtrian trembled; and by Rome approv'd,
ı Henry's virtues was his Rome belov'd.
)iſcord was exil'd from Lutetia's ſhore,
.nd Mayenne brave, a rebel now no more,
ſimſelf his province, in ſubjection brings,
'he beſt of ſubjects to the beſt of kings.

END of the HENRIADE.





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